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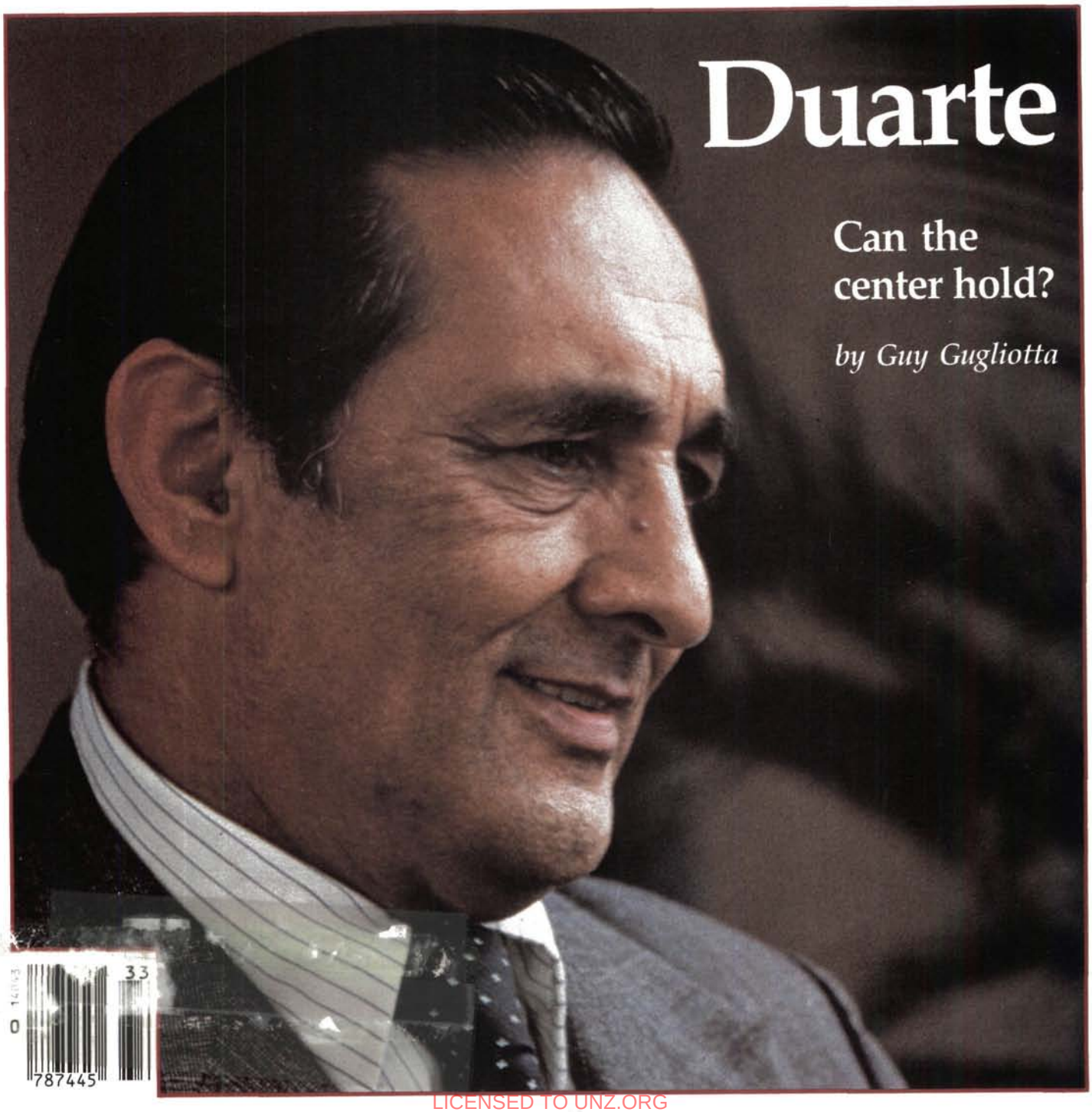
'WIRED' PARODY

Nabobs of neoliberalism, by Dennis Wrong

BRUSTEIN ON LILLIAN HELLMAN • CHRISTOPHER LASCH ON COMPUTERS • ISRAEL'S IMPASSE

THE NEW REPUBLIC



Duarte

Can the center hold?

by Guy Gugliotta

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CORRESPONDENCE

PORN AGAIN

To the editors:

The one idea missing from Jean Bethke Elshtain's "The New Porn Wars" (TNR, June 25) is an acknowledgement that defending civil liberties often means standing up for very questionable characters and their right to say or publish ideas that the mainstream may not like to hear.

Where is the border line between pornography and popular culture? Will the radical and conservative antipornographers be allowed to censor gothic romances, hard-boiled detective stories, gory horror movies, and any other manifestation of our culture that projects a view of the world they dislike? And if we allow this first assault on the principle of free speech and press, will other aggrieved minorities step forward to demand similar "rights" to protect their self-image?

In a society that allows Hitler's *Mein Kampf* to be sold in any bookstore, despite the proof of where such ideas lead, the war over erotic literature, even sadistic erotic literature, that offends a few (or even many) moralists seems a bit ironic. How can liberals in any age side with totalitarians of the left and right in any struggle that proclaims the community's supremacy over the individual, except in an undoubted emergency that endangers the community and, hence, the individual's rights in that community?

GARY MCCOLLIM
Falls Church, Virginia

TALK OF THE TOWN

To the editors:

Michael Kinsley's piece on William Shawn and *The New Yorker*'s fact problem ("Dept. of Amplification," TNR, July 16 & 23) brought back memories of A. J. Liebling. But why date the loss of *The New Yorker*'s virtue from Alastair Reid's revelations, when the magazine had already been deflowered in October 1982 by Jacobo Timerman? Even critics who embrace Mr. Timerman's point of view on the war in Lebanon were embarrassed by the exaggerations, falsehoods, and errors in Mr. Timerman's *New Yorker* articles which became his book, *The Longest War*. Why does Mr. Shawn strain at Mr. Reid's Spanish gnats, having swallowed Mr. Timerman's Lebanese camels?

ROBERT RIESMAN
Providence, Rhode Island

THE WAR WE LOST

To the editors:

It is grossly misleading to argue, as John Schwarz does in "The War We Won" (TNR, June 18), that the social programs of the Great Society had a significant poverty-reducing effect. President Johnson's programs were designed to *reduce* welfare by training the poor for independent living, and they failed to do so.

It was Richard Nixon who, after pronouncing Great Society social interventionism a failure, tried a transfer payment strategy that did have an impact in reducing poverty. I leave it to others to judge whether the resultant increase in dependency was to the good or harm of the nation. But it was the opposite of what the Great Society was supposed to accomplish.

Mr. Schwarz's comments on inflation and job creation in the 1960s and 1970s are similarly simplistic and misleading. He seems to assume, for instance, that without government intervention, the pace of job creation in those decades would have been the same as in the 1950s, which is absurd. The increase in population by itself, of course, generated a vast number of new jobs.

Die-hard conservatives are almost certainly wrong when they ascribe all the evils of today to misguided government policies of the past. But Mr. Schwarz's arguments are no more deserving of respect.

CHARLES R. MORRIS
Brooklyn, New York

Mr. Schwarz replies:

Mr. Morris presumes wrongly that the Great Society was directed only toward achieving economic independence. Many Americans are incapable of full economic independence. Transfer programs such as Medicare and Medicaid demonstrate clearly that the Great Society was very much intended to assist these and other such Americans.

Mr. Morris is in error, too, when he says that the Great Society policies failed to advance numerous Americans toward economic independence. For example, scores of detailed cost/benefit studies have documented that manpower training programs brought improved employability and higher wages to hundreds of thousands of participants. With hardly any exceptions, the studies have concluded that the dollar value of the benefits for participants, as well as the nation, exceeded the costs of the programs.

Even Mr. Morris's claim that the reduction in poverty came mainly during the Nixon Administration is mistaken. Poverty fell from about 14 percent of the public in 1964 to 9 percent by 1969. Thereafter, in the six Nixon years, poverty fell at a slower rate, declining by 2 percent to about 7 percent of the public in 1975.

BETTER NED THAN RED

To the editors:

TRB's "Intellectual Pork Barrel" (TNR, July 2) is certainly directed against the whole idea of creating a National Endowment for Democracy. Without questioning TRB's right to criticize this project, I would like to express my surprise at how casually he judges the grantees on the basis of the titles of their proposals to NED and nothing else.

Take for example, the sarcastic report that "The Andrei Sakharov Institute would get $25,000 to finance concerts in Europe by the Soviet Emigré Orchestra, and another $50,000 for a feasibility study for a Center for Human Rights and Peace." The $25,000 grant, which has not yet been approved by the NED, was designated for the International Campaign to Free Andrei Sakharov and his wife. The orchestra tour was part of this campaign, which had also included among other things a series of scientific conferences in honor of Andrei Sakharov organized by the Sakharov Institute in cooperation with the French Academy of Sciences and European Nuclear Center in Geneva. The campaign generated enormous publicity for Sakharov and certainly helped to keep the flame of the fight for his freedom alive. This is not only our opinion but that of members of the Sakharov family who actively participated in this campaign.

As for the proposed Center for Human Rights and Peace, it will concentrate its research and activities on the

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FROM WASHINGTON

THE THEME PARK

San Francisco

On Thursday evening in Moscone Center, it all seemed plausible. In fact, it had become hard to see why anyone would vote for that silly old actor and that preppy stiff instead of these two flesh-and-blood-and-sweat-and-tears Americans from the party of real people. In four days, the Democrats did a brilliant job of repositioning themselves (as they say in the advertising business) from the party of big government to the party of the aspiring middle class. Nice work, considering that their Presidential nominee is a man who didn't even own a house outside of Washington until his campaign manager found one for him, and that their Vice Presidential nominee, on the other hand, is the wife of a real estate tycoon with *three* houses.

What you see is what you get, Walter Mondale likes to say, but what you see depends on when you look. Today's Mondale promises "no laundry lists that raid our Treasury," and says that "My Presidency will be about . . . values" such as "Doing your work. Earning your way. Paying your dues. Rising on merit." Who'd have guessed?

When you hear that a Presidency is going to be "about" things, you know that you have left the world of political issues of the traditional sort and entered the world of "themes." Themes are the new building blocks of American politics, the tools of the professional imagists who run the campaigns of both parties. Themes have it all over issues. Issues are messy and contentious. They imply an agenda. People may actually disagree with you. A properly designed theme commits you to nothing, and therefore gives no offense. With a theme, the worst that can happen is that people will find the other guy's theme more compelling.

The themes of the 1984 Democratic convention were "the family" and "the future." A dollar for every time these words were intoned from the podium would just about pay for a week's hotel bills in San Francisco. (Put the family and the future together, and you get "children," the note on which both Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro ended their acceptance speeches.) As a visual expression of the convention's "future" theme, the convention hall contained none of the traditional posters of a lot of dead people like Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, or Lyndon Johnson. The traditional Democratic theme song was replaced by a disco tune called "Celebration." The only time I heard "Happy Days Are Here Again" was when they carted out Claude Pepper, a man who defies repackaging as "the future."

The "family" theme was the convention's main rhetorical tic. Governor Mario Cuomo began his keynote address by referring to "the family of New York" and ended by invoking "the family of America." Mondale journeyed to Leave-It-To-Beaver-Land, ordering parents to "turn off that television" and children to "do their homework." Ferraro promised to "restore . . . family values."

Other than posing for a group portrait by Norman Rockwell, what do the Democrats propose to *do* about "the family"? Presumably Mondale does not favor federal regulations requiring children to do their homework. The only serious attempt to put flesh on these rhetorical bones was Cuomo's. He used "the family" as a metaphor for the Democratic vision of society, in contrast to the Republican vision of society as a collection of atomized individuals (or individual family units). In a family, people tolerate one another whatever their differences. In a family, life's winners share their good fortune with life's losers. A family works together to protect itself and move ahead.

This is wonderful stuff. It gives civil rights the aroma of pot roast, turns welfare into something cozy, claims defense as a Democratic issue, and even takes the cold metallic edge off of industrial policy by making it sound like a bunch of Korean immigrants starting a vegetable market. Government is not the hateful foreign object of Ronald Reagan's speeches. It is the expression of our shared values and goals. This is exactly what the Democratic Party *should* be about. But is it?

Mario Cuomo speaks of "a tale of two cities" in America, one of Reagan's rich friends and one where the "elderly . . . tremble in the basements" and "people . . . sleep . . . in the gutter." But most Americans don't live in either of those cities, and are not interested in class conflict. *A Tale of Two Cities* was about a different revolution, not ours. Americans don't dream of storming the country clubs; they dream of joining them. That's why Geraldine Ferraro's current prosperity is a plus, not a minus, in making her a symbol of what America's about.

Yet the Democrats are attempting, in imagery like Cuomo's, to borrow the moral authority of Robin Hood, who takes from the rich and gives to the poor, and use it in defense of government activities that take from the middle class and give to other members of the middle class. That's what Social Security does. (The average elderly person, far from sleeping in the gutter, is now better off than the general population.) That's what protectionism does (taking from automobile buyers and giving to automobile makers). That's what farm price supports do.

The party platform and the convention speakers, while pledging up Nob Hill and back down again not to tamper with treasured middle-class goodies, offered little except pretty words for those who really *are* in the gutter. Yet without revising policies like these, Democratic promises to reduce the deficit and revamp the economy for international competition are hollow. A family that was really looking to its own future, as well as a family that was concerned about its poor relations, would think a little harder.

Still, it was reassuring to see the Democrats thinking and changing at all, and a positive inspiration to hear them talking so well. Most people in the convention hall, and I imagine most watching on television, had never heard so much eloquent political oratory. The Republicans will be hard put to match it.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
AUGUST 13 & 20, 1984

MONDALE'S MANIFESTO

It would be an exaggeration to say that Walter Mondale converted a surly, dispirited, and divided Democratic Party into a unified force dedicated to common goals and a common program. The party remains divided, both culturally and politically, among traditional New Dealers, future-oriented yuppies, and the ideologues of Jesse Jackson's rainbow coalition. But considering the disasters that might have been visited upon the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco, Mr. Mondale performed impressively.

No, he performed impressively, period. He avoided nasty battles with his rivals. He modulated the disputes that did occur. He and his campaign aides orchestrated a grand television extravaganza, which is what party conventions increasingly have become. He brought the party together around his running mate, Representative Geraldine Ferraro, and around its common short-term objective of ousting President Reagan. And he delivered an acceptance speech brilliantly designed to demonstrate to the country that the Democratic Party has rededicated itself to values widely shared in America—family, economic growth, the work ethic, overt patriotism, and maintaining a strong defense.

One could argue that Mr. Mondale has no choice but to shift back toward the political center if he wants to have any prayer of regaining the seven million voters—10 percent of the electorate—who voted for Jimmy Carter in 1976 and switched to Ronald Reagan in 1980. But whether he spoke by choice or by necessity, he was obviously speaking with conviction. Unfortunately, many of those who were listening to him in the convention hall do not share that conviction. Hence the bows to reflexive anti-interventionism in the party's platform, the almost comical quota-mongering in the debates over party rules, and the tepid response of the delegates to passages in Mr. Mondale's speech criticizing the Soviet Union, acknowledging past Democratic mistakes, and calling for a strong private economy.

Mr. Mondale did his share of bowing to pressures during his primary campaign, during rules and platform committee deliberations, and even at the convention. He agreed to a tortured compromise with Mr. Jackson on the issue of affirmative action, removing from the platform any specific ban on quotas and substituting an endorsement of "verifiable measurements" as a means to overcome the effects of prior discrimination. (Satellite photographs of construction sites, perhaps?) The Democrats remain chronically unable to shake the public perception—too often justified—that they believe in dispensing benefits in society to groups by quota, rather than by individual merit. But Mr. Mondale distanced himself from Mr. Jackson on the eve of the convention, saying firmly but unrancorously that their differences simply were too deep for Mr. Jackson to be considered for a place on the ticket. And at the convention, Mr. Mondale stood firm on the issues of nonrecognition of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, a 20 percent defense spending cut, and a pledge that the United States would never be first to use nuclear weapons—and he won.

Mr. Mondale's acceptance speech, we hope, represents

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a declaration of independence from the excesses of the platform and the rules. Mr. Mondale seems to have a healthy conception of America as a land of opportunity for individuals *regardless of* race and sex. "I do not welcome the drowsy harmony of the Republican Party," he said. "They deny differences; we bridge them. They squelch debate; we welcome it. They are uniform; we are united. They are a portrait of privilege; we are a mirror of America."

The most striking part of Mr. Mondale's speech, and we guess the most politically effective, was its "new realism" section, advising those who voted for President Reagan last time that their viewpoint had been heard. "We know that America must have a strong defense," Mr. Mondale said, "and a sober view of the Soviets. We know that government must be as well-managed as it is well-meaning. We know that a healthy, growing private economy is the key to our future. We know that Harry Truman spoke the truth: 'A President has to be able to say yes and no, mostly no.' "

Almost as good was Mr. Mondale's reminder of what most of those Reagan voters had *not* intended to endorse in 1980—the $200 billion deficit, the arms race, Star Wars, the trashing of civil rights and programs for the poor, the poisoning of the environment. He put the President's election-year economic recovery in terms ordinary people can understand: "We are living on borrowed money and borrowed time. These deficits hike interest rates, clobber exports, stunt investment, kill jobs, undermine growth, cheat our kids, and shrink our future."

Mr. Mondale took the courageous and unorthodox tack of stating the truth about federal finances to the American people: "Whoever is inaugurated in January, the American people will have to pay Mr. Reagan's bills. The budget will be squeezed. Taxes will go up. And anyone who says they won't is not telling the truth. Let's tell the truth. Mr. Reagan will raise taxes and so will I. He won't tell you. I just did." That passage of his speech left the professional politicians in the hall literally gasping: advocating higher taxes in an election year is the classic don't-do-that of smart politics. Mr. Mondale is gambling that this time the American people just might respond favorably to candor. Mr. Reagan, at his press conference a few days after the Democrats dispersed, seemed to rule out any tax increase. But he sounded unusually unsure of himself, and he offered some palaver about the need for tax "simplification" in order to "broaden the base" of taxation so that "individuals' rates" can be further reduced. This sounds to us like a national sales tax that would be used to finance yet another marginal income tax rate cut for the rich, whose appetite for "incentive" is insatiable. If this is what Mr. Reagan is edging toward, we hope Mr. Mondale is able to smoke him out. The public may yet support Mr. Mondale's demand that the President quit obfuscating and put his deficit-closing program on the table for debate in advance of the election.

CARTOON BY MIKE PETERS

We certainly do not agree with all of Mr. Mondale's program or all the contents of his speech. Getting tough on trade, to Mr. Mondale, tends to mean protectionism. "Removal of all foreign forces" from Central America, which Mr. Mondale said would be a goal of his Administration, would mean an absence of Americans, Cubans, and Soviets, but if it left the Nicaraguans grotesquely overarmed and intimidating their neighbors it would not be enough. Mr. Mondale said that in his first hundred days he would "stop the illegal war in Nicaragua," but cutting off aid to anti-Sandinista guerrillas would remove much of the bargaining leverage the United States has for inducing the Nicaraguans to stop exporting revolution throughout Central America.

In spite of these disagreements, however, we are heartened that Mr. Mondale has moved toward the center, where elections are won and the country must be governed. We commend many of the goals that he set for the future—making the United States competitive in the world economy, launching a renaissance in education, sponsoring re-investment by American industry, eliminating hunger among children, negotiating arms control with the Soviets, and offering equal opportunity for advancement to women and minorities. And we share the view of American society and American possibility that Mr. Mondale has outlined—a more expansive and generous view than the incumbent's, yet tempered by sober realism—and that he has so dramatically fulfilled in his choice of a running mate. Mr. Mondale and Ms. Ferraro face an immensely difficult struggle. But at the least they promise the country a thorough and—who knows?—perhaps even enlightening debate.

ISRAEL'S DEAD HEAT

A bang, not a whimper, was what the world expected of Israel this week. The contest between Yitzhak Shamir and Shimon Peres was described with great drama; the soul of the Jewish state, as usual, was the prize. Indeed, the enormity of the issues that the electorate was to address is indisputable. The economy is grotesque:

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inflation is running at 400 percent, and even the Israeli middle class, which is expert at deferring the consequences of the country's mismanagement and at shopping frantically in the jaws of economic calamity, has been badly hurt. The war in Lebanon has divided the population—the security of Israel's northern region was purchased at a cost in human lives that even many supporters of Operation Peace in Galilee find too high—and the Palestinian problem makes no progress, except in the way of a greater polarization between Jews and Arabs. The bitterness that Israeli society bottled up during the long decades of state-building and the fight for survival is out of the bottle; the angry arousal of the Sephardim and the cocky self-confidence of the Orthodox are only two of the many social strains upon the body politic. There was reason, then, to expect a more than ordinary exercise of electoral opinion. There was reason to expect a referendum on the national idea of the future.

The election of July 23 was such a referendum. What happened? Nothing; that is, no clear direction was given. There is no national idea of the future, just as there is no Israeli soul. There are many such ideas, rather, being seriously debated by many Israeli souls. The results of the voting are a perfect illustration of the kind of paralysis to which a genuine democracy may be prone. At this writing, the results seem to be Labor forty-five seats, Likud forty, with the remaining three dozen seats distributed across a broad spectrum of small parties. Labor's squeaky little plurality will probably oblige President Chaim Herzog, a former lion of Labor himself, to ask Mr. Peres to form a government; and Mr. Peres will probably fail in the attempt. Most of the small party representatives in the Knesset (the religious parties, of which there are four, most notably) will be happier to serve in a government headed by Mr. Shamir.

THE DUST has not settled yet, but some conclusions already seem justified. First, that there is genuine political and ideological division in the Israeli public. All want peace and all want prosperity; but there is a war of ideas being waged in the Jewish state about the most proper means of attaining those goals. On the economy there is the most agreement. It is commonly acknowledged that sooner or later austerity will be required; the problem is not the correct analysis but the courage to act. Only a government of national unity can be expected to muster such courage, and no government of national unity can be expected. On the Palestinian problem, or the problem of the West Bank, or the problem of "Judea and Samaria," there is the most disagreement. Mr. Peres is for a territorial compromise, according to which the populated areas of the occupied territory would be returned to Jordan. Mr. Shamir is—well, he will not say it in so many words, but he is for annexation; he will consider political arrangements with the population, not geographical arrangements with the land. And most fundamentally—here is the really agonizing dimension of the Israeli debate—there is division about the direction of the society. Religious and secular, Sephardim and Ashkenazim, all have different notions about the nature of the state in which they live. (Obviously the demographic lines are not so neatly drawn; but the intellectual and political lines are.)

Second, the revival of the small parties in Israeli politics. After the Likud's rise to power in 1977, it became conventional wisdom in Israel that the sectarianism of Israeli politics was over. Israel would be a two-party state, the arena for a clearly defined contest between two major philosophies and organizations. The influence of the religious parties upon the government of Menachem Begin should have given the lie to this particular obituary. After this week's election, sectarianism is in full swing. In part the political sects reflect the intense intellectual and political passion that characterizes the Israeli political system; it is not enough in Israel to agree generally; the details make all the difference. In part they reflect the rather developed state of Israeli extremism. There are many shades of opinion, right and left, that neither of the major parties can countenance. In any event, the sum total of these plucky political players, each with a seat or two or three in a parliament of 120, now constitutes the infamous blocking minority of which the students of democratic politics have always warned. No government will be formed without the consent of most of these players; and no government will govern without their consent, either.

THIRD, and most dramatically, the elections of 1984 are devastating evidence of the decline of Labor. This cannot be observed except sadly. But Mr. Peres has blown it again. Under his leadership Labor squandered a commanding lead in the polls and did no better than a mostly dead heat. When this happened before, in 1977, Labor drew no serious conclusions from its losses, retired for no serious reflection, made no significant changes in its structure or its sentiments. Begin's victory was accepted as a kind of aberration in Israeli history, which would (so great was Labor's identification with power, so great its sense of entitlement) swiftly right itself. Well, such dodges won't work anymore. A little Israeli neoliberalism is in order. Those who argue, as friends of Labor or as enemies, that the party has lost touch with the rhythms of the Jewish republic must now be heeded. But it must be neoliberalism with an ideological inflection; it will not do, when Israeli politics are becoming more and more a matter of world views and myths, when the Likud comes before the public with a passionate nationalism and an appeal to the holiest historical and geographical symbols, to run a ticket led by a technocrat whose greatest gift is for finessing the fine points and splitting the difference. (Nor will a thousand public relations ideas of David Sawyer, who consulted for Labor's campaign, impress the Israeli public more than the sincerity of a single Israeli settler.) Labor has lost its credi-

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bility as the purveyor of principle. It has become a party of consumers and managers. Pragmatism, yes; but there must be more. Nor is it all Shimon Peres's fault. He is the perfect spokesman for this period in his party's history. (It should be noted, too, that the Likud—that is, Labor's secular counterpart on the right—did not improve its position either. Both large parties seem to have suffered from the new tyranny of the small.)

Finally, the election this week has demonstrated the new political prestige of extremism in Israel. The politics of resentment are bearing fruit. Ariel Sharon's new lease on political life is proof of this; the mobs that surrounded him during the campaign found their enthusiasm endorsed by the respect with which his party treated him. The most disastrous proof is the election of Rabbi Meir Kahane to the Knesset. This racist who dishonors his yarmulke and his flag, who threatens to expel the Arabs from the West Bank and preaches pathetic fire and brimstone sermons against sex between Jews and Arabs, will now sit in the halls of parliament and pretend that he is a parliamentarian. Bitterly we observe that this is not the first time that a democracy has watched an enemy of democracy batten on its rules. And we note, too, the presence in the Knesset of Uri Avnery's little pro-P.L.O. faction. He is not a racist, but he is a fool; and a mischievous fool. To be sure, neither of these men will have any influence at all upon the future of Israel, and each had a right to run. Still, it takes 1 percent of the Israeli electorate, or 20,000 votes, to win a seat in the Knesset. That makes for a lot of moral and political ugliness.

What now? It is too early to say; at this writing the votes of the soldiers in the field have not begun to be counted. It seems safe to say, however, that any government that is formed in the wake of this split will be a weak, nervous government, at the mercy of its minority members, incapable of any action that will bring it to the stage of history. If Yitzhak Shamir heads the government, he will lack the power to annex the West Bank. If Shimon Peres heads the government, he will lack the power to make peace. The King of Jordan, in whose unwilling hands lies the initiative, will play more polo. Israel is at an impasse. The debate, in all its democratic glory, must continue.

Misplaced Gratitude

Chancellor Helmut Kohl of West Germany, apparently still smarting after his country's exclusion from the allied commemoration in June of the Normandy invasion, recently pointed with pride to another anniversary. On July 20, 1944, a group of German officers tried and failed to assassinate Adolf Hitler. Recalling that day, Mr. Kohl said that "forty years on, we remember the Germans who paid with their lives for their courageous stand for human rights and freedom, for justice and truth." Mr. Kohl also has said that Count Klaus von Stauffenberg, the leader of the plot and the man who planted a mined briefcase under a table at a military command meeting with Hitler, is the historical figure he most admires.

The conspirators suffered a terrible death, and some of them did indeed demonstrate courage. Too little too late, perhaps; but the death of Hitler in the summer of 1944 would have saved an untold number of lives. Still, we must be precise. The conspiracy was not inspired by any special concern for "human rights and freedom" or for "justice and truth." As Mr. Kohl should know, these conspirators were right-wing patriots; they—and Count von Stauffenberg in particular—were motivated by the impending defeat of the fatherland, which was inevitable after Normandy. They set out to kill a madman who had done great damage to Germany's reputation, and its ability to negotiate a favorable conclusion to the war. They were not at all moved by what Hitler, the conspirators themselves, and the German people had done to millions of innocents.

A more honest assessment of the incident may be found in the journals of the Prussian aristocrat Friedrich P. Reck-Malleczewen, who indeed paid with his life for his abhorrence of Nazism. After he learned of the failed assassination attempt, he wrote in his *Diary of a Man in Despair*: "A little late, gentlemen, you who made this archdestroyer of Germany and ran after him, as long as everything seemed to be going well; you who . . . without hesitation swore every oath demanded of you and reduced yourselves to the despicable flunkies of this criminal. . . . Now, when the bankruptcy can no longer be concealed, they betray the house that went broke, in order to establish a political alibi for themselves—the same men who have betrayed everything that was in the way of their claim to power." Mr. Reck-Malleczewen was killed in a concentration camp on the eve of the Third Reich's collapse.

To celebrate the act of the plotters—as Mr. Kohl has—perpetuates a dreadful political alibi. If there were any lingering doubts about the wisdom of excluding West Germany from the Normandy commemoration, Mr. Kohl has erased them.

Notebook

□ TIME WAS when a member of a minority might lie to pass as a member of a majority. In liberal, pluralist America (in Walter Mondale's America, some would say) a member of a majority might lie to pass as a member of a minority. Literature provides useful examples. The woman Mary Ann Evans presented herself as the man George Eliot because she wanted to be fairly read. Last week it was revealed that the Hispanic writer Danny Santiago, author of *Famous All Over Town*, a prize-winning novel

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about the Los Angeles barrio, is really the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant writer Daniel James, who spent decades as a volunteer in the city's Spanish-speaking slums. How some of Danny Santiago's admirers squirmed! Not that the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, which awarded him $5,000, didn't like the book; but they liked it a little more, it appears, for being the work of a Chicano. The Academy was praising ethnicity, that is, at least as much as it was praising art. And, according to *The New York Times*, some Hispanic writers, too, "regard the deception as serious." Well, we congratulate Mr. James for his deception. He has exposed a classic case of liberal condescension to minorities. And we congratulate Mr. James for his literary achievement. As our contributing editor R. W. B. Lewis told the *Times*, "Now that I know, I admire the novel all the more." Indeed, Mr. James has proven something much more profound than the literary affirmative action he was supposed to prove. He has shown that it is possible for any person of any race, sex, or culture to understand any person of any race, sex, or culture. But it requires hard work, and an open heart. That the author of this novel clearly has, whatever he is called.

□ IN THE OLD DAYS—meaning from 1952 through 1980—you didn't have to go to a convention in order to attend it. Because the TV coverage was "gavel-to-gavel," you could simply turn on the set and wallow in the proceedings just as surely as if you were actually there. Now it's just another mini-series, packaged in two-hour time slots and emphasizing star turns and production values. In San Francisco, Representative Bill Alexander, Mayor Ed Koch, Representative Stephen Solarz, and a half-dozen others all made speeches that were interesting in one way or another. None of them was on TV, unless you count the admirable C-Span. The demise of gavel-to-gavel means the end of the political equivalent of the lunch counter at Schwab's Drugstore. From now on, the only new talent entitled to screen tests will be the network's own floor reporters.

□ CORRECTION: An article in last week's NEW REPUBLIC ("Preferences," TNR, August 6) implausibly seemed to suggest that ten out of fifty Democrats prefer "a long walk" after sex. This should, of course, have been "a long talk." THE NEW REPUBLIC apologizes to Chairman Charles Manatt and the Democratic Party.

□ FORTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "When Ernest Hemingway's first books appeared, they seemed to be a transcription of the real world. With his insistence on 'presenting things truly,' he seemed to be a writer in the naturalistic tradition (for all his technical experiments); and the professors of American literature, when they got round to mentioning his books in their surveys, treated him as if he were the Dreiser of the lost generation. Going back to his work in 1944, you perceive his kinship with a wholly different group of novelists, let us say with Poe and Hawthorne and Melville: the haunted and nocturnal writers, the men who dealt in images that were symbols of an inner world. In no other writer of our time can you find such a profusion of corpses: dead women in the rain; dead soldiers bloated in their uniforms and surrounded by torn papers; sunken liners full of bodies that float past the closed portholes. In no other writer can you find so many suffering animals: mules with their forelegs broken drowning in shallow water off the quai at Smyrna; gored horses in the bullring; wounded hyenas first snapping at their own entrails and then eating them with relish. And morally wounded people who also devour themselves: punch-drunk boxers, soldiers with battle fatigue, veterans crazy with 'the old rale,' lesbians, nymphomaniacs, bullfighters who have lost their nerve, men who lie awake all night while their brains get to racing 'like a flywheel with the weight gone'—here are visions as terrifying as those of 'The Pit and the Pendulum,' even though most of them are copied from life; here are nightmares at noonday, accurately described, pictured without the romantic mist, but having the nature of obsessions or hypnagogic visions between sleep and waking." ("Hemingway At Midnight," by Malcolm Cowley, August 14, 1944.)

Traditionalism à la mode.

THE FAMILY WAY

San Francisco

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY is a business; the Democratic Party is a family. Togetherness, not efficiency, is the greatest virtue, perhaps because strife is so recurrent. Only family members know how to help or hurt each other most. One must be privy to the intimate history to be able to produce true misery. Throughout the long primary campaign, the pursuit of unhappiness seemed to be the Democrats' purpose. When they convened in San Francisco, the fear of yet more schisms had not yet been dispelled.

From the platform of Moscone Center, speaker after speaker accused Ronald Reagan of having fostered divisions among the classes, races, and sexes. Their description of what Reagan has done to the country was a portrait of the fractured party. By advocating a united America, the speakers expressed their wish for a united Democracy. As in a fable, the dream assumed literal form. To unite the discordant family, a marriage took place, a marriage in which the man and the woman can't hold hands. By making a choice that was highly unorthodox, Mondale challenged the Republicans' claim to traditionalism. The convention became a sacrament of union.

The events had a classic four-act dramatic structure.

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Each act featured a soliloquy by a leading player, touching in some way on the theme of the family. It wasn't until the final act that the meaning of the theme was clarified—or, rather, that the next level of confusion became apparent.

The prologue was spoken by Governor Mario Cuomo of New York. He re-established the founding myth; he told the tales of heroic ancestors. The performance, the man, and the message were all of a piece, a gestalt, a deeply personal, and nontransferable, vision offered as a universal vision. He presented the poetry about the past that Mondale himself never could manage through the cold months of being assailed as yesterday's man. Cuomo's evocative rhetoric, however, didn't diminish Mondale. Instead, it gave him a background against which he appeared more vivid, less abstract.

All the elements in Cuomo's vision are timeless. "It's an old story. It's as old as our history," he said. His imagery has old-world overtones: he speaks of a country divided "into the royalty and rabble" and of a new President, "a Democrat born not to the blood of kings." Reagan's policies are nothing more than greed, creating a "tale of two cities." This is a view of Manhattan from Queens. And if greed is eternal, rebuked before by Americans, why is it now embraced? The people have fallen through trickery: "glitter . . . showmanship . . . smoke and mirrors . . . illusions." The people are decent, but have lost "their senses." Reagan's election in 1980, in fact, was "one under false pretenses." The Democrats must offer such a compelling "logic" that not even a "slick Madison Avenue commercial" will "muffle the sound." What the party must adhere to is a "credo," whose first principle is that of community: "the idea of family." Once Democrats reaffirm this value, they can command the future because they will be in touch with the past. The path ahead lies through memory. "We can do it again. If we do not forget. . . . Please make this nation remember how futures are built." They are built by "the family of America, for the love of God."

DURING his speech Cuomo gesticulated with his right hand raised in the customary benediction of a priest. With his first two fingers raised and his second two folded against his palm, he distinctly made the sign of the cross, a subliminal gesture impressing itself on the subconscious of millions. Cuomo blessed the audience, his physical movements uniting them in one faith. Only through the Democracy could they find salvation.

Salvation, too, is the goal of Jesse Jackson, the speaker of the second night. Many Democrats worried that he would fabricate a crisis that only he could resolve. Jackson indeed came to resolve the crisis of anxiety. He presented himself as the outcast son, who wears a crown of thorns. And he invoked his own metaphor of the family, the rainbow coalition, which must include "the damned, disinherited, disrespected, and the despised" or else there can be no "redemption."

Jackson addressed himself to the problem of how an imperfect party and an imperfect people can fulfill a "perfect mission." His speech operated on three levels—the religious, the political, and the personal. And it was divided into three discernible parts—the crucifixion, the passion, the resurrection.

Images of death and martyrdom pervade the first section. Jackson speaks to Hubert Humphrey on his deathbed who counsels him on the need for forgiveness. Jackson measures the price of progress in the suffering of Jews and blacks together: Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney. Tears of rage, tears of grief. Jesse is on the cross. He has sinned, driven a wedge between blacks and Jews. Hymie, Hymie, why have you forsaken me? "Charge it to my head and not to my heart." By our forgiveness he is born again.

Then, the passion of the dispossessed. Poverty, hunger, broken homes. Jackson understands that what Reagan is about is more than greed. "Reaganism is a spirit," he says. It is a "false prophecy." Reagan's failure is moral, not just economic. "Apparently he is not familiar with the structure of a prayer. You thank the Lord for the food you are about to receive, not the food that just left" (because of Reagan's cuts in food programs).

FINALLY, the resurrection. He recalls a childhood memory, hearing a preacher speak of Jesus: " 'If I be lifted up, I'll draw all men unto me.' I didn't quite understand what he meant as a child growing up. But I understand a little better now. If you raise up truth, it's magnetic." Jackson becomes Jesus: "I too was born in a slum." And as he becomes the leader of "divine inspiration," the congregation sees its identity in him. "If one of us rises, all of us must rise." Suffering will nurture faith, and faith will defeat "false prophecy." "Our time has come. No grave can hold our body down." He is risen. *Hallelujah!*

The third night belonged to Gary Hart. His critics wanted him to praise Mondale and disappear for good. But though he declared that he would support the nominee, he remained an unrepentant son—no filial piety here. At the moment he spoke he still held the loyalty of almost half the electoral party. To introduce him, Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man" broke into a rock tempo and segued into the theme from *The Magnificent Seven* as the screens in the hall showed pictures of Hart on horseback. This *son et lumière* show was somewhere between "American Bandstand" and MTV. Then Hart appeared, the high plains drifter. "Promises are cheap, rhetoric is hollow, and nostalgia is not a program." *Make my day*. His woodenly delivered speech is a barely concealed critique of the regulars. "For the worst sin in political affairs is not to be mistaken, but to be irrelevant." He presented a completely coherent position, his method of experimentalism and program of post-industrialism. He was the only major speaker to discuss explicitly industrial policy, and he was also the only one to mention the Vietnam War. Few really heard him. They saw, instead, his icy defiance: "We will prevail." Later that night Mondale was nominated. Hart might have been. He avowed that if he had, he would have selected as his running mate Geraldine Ferraro.

Ferraro had been Mondale's fourth choice. When the

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Vice Presidential selection process contrived by his inner political family disintegrated into a public relations absurdity, the pressure on Mondale to pick a running mate before the convention became intense. He was initially smitten with the rather stiff San Francisco mayor, Dianne Feinstein. Some of his senior staff favored Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley. Others wanted San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros. Mario Cuomo and Tip O'Neill wanted Ferraro. For a variety of reasons the other contestants were eliminated. And Ferraro stood alone. Her selection was tactical, but what began as an expediency turned into a phenomenon. The arranged marriage blossomed. "This is an exciting choice," said Mondale twice, in introducing his running mate in the red dress and pearls.

Ferraro's speech on the culminating night of the convention was laced with the language of marriage: "Love, caring, partnership." She used the word "faith" seven times. She presented herself as the personification of change, and yet against certain recent changes. She harmonized with Cuomo's theme of traditionalism. Her dream is of the restoration of the world before Reagan, although that world didn't have feminists on the ticket. Reagan has violated "the rules" handed down from "our parents." The "rules" work well for them and for us, and they can work well for "our children." "Tonight," she said, "we reclaim our dream." She means both a dream of the past and a dream that never was.

AT LAST, it's Mondale's turn. He talks about "recapturing the best in our tradition." But this isn't a flat summary; it's time for a surprise ending. To begin with, Mondale repudiates Cuomo's logic. No, Reagan didn't win because he fooled people. He won because of "our mistakes." Just as Jackson confessed his personal transgressions, so did Mondale. He is chastened by Reagan, and he has adjusted his position accordingly. He advocates "no defense cuts that weaken our security; no business taxes that weaken our economy; no laundry lists that raid our treasury." Mondale will reduce the budget deficit by two-thirds by the end of his term, he'll cut spending, *and* he'll raise taxes. The crowd thunders approval.

This promise to tax us seems to be an extraordinarily forthright and strong statement. Actually, Mondale's rhetoric and Reagan's practice have passed each other going in opposite directions. For decades the Democrats attempted to convince Republicans that the federal budget ought not to be confused with the household budget. Now Mondale has dispensed with the old-time Keynesian religion. While everyone, including Reagan, views the current deficit as too large, Mondale takes an extreme position; he seems to have turned against deficits per se. Reagan's political popularity, in the meantime, is buoyed by military Keynesianism and tax cuts which, though advertised as supply-side, have as their main consequence burgeoning consumer demands. Senator Edward Kennedy, in his introduction of Mondale to the convention, derided Reagan as a "California Coolidge." Mondale's program, however, is almost literally a reiteration of Hoover's—tax increases, a balanced budget, and protectionism. He is trying to sell a policy of austerity in a boom. Moreover, he's promoting retro-Hooverism to an electorate accustomed to thinking of him in terms of largesse. But the image of Mondale playing against type was precisely what captivated the convention. He's the new Mondale, with the old values. "And now," said the head of the family, "we leave San Francisco—together." The thousands of delegates waved thousands of flags, sang patriotic hymns, and bopped to "Beat It." Gerry Ferraro boogied across the platform. Mondale stood smiling—the husband who doesn't dance.

The Democrats' rediscovery of traditionalism is a heartfelt tactic aimed at recapturing their working-class constituency, much of which defected in 1980. The Democrats' tolerance for diversity, they can now say, flows from their orthodoxy; they're open because they're close-knit. The Mondale-Ferraro nuclear family at the party's center is proof of the claim. Reagan's orthodoxy, by contrast, is threatening to those who don't share it. With Ferraro, the Democrats may have the "social issues" coming and going. Can this compensate for Mondale's befuddled economics?

More than anyone else, Geraldine Ferraro embodies the ambivalence of the party toward change and tradition, a conflict that dangerously fragmented the party during the primary campaign. The success of the ticket may depend upon her ability to maintain the balance. No other Vice Presidential candidate has been the focus of such tension. She cannot do it alone. Mondale must be a good provider and at the same time support her independence. They must make this modern marriage work—if nothing else, for the sake of the children.

SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL

CROSSCURRENTS

THE NEW TERRORISM

MUCH OF THE current debate about terrorism is confounded by disagreement about what terrorism is. Some of this disagreement is ideological, the desire for the political advantage that comes from painting the other man's freedom fighter as just another terrorist. Some of it, though, derives from the assumption that terrorism is a static or unitary phenomenon. It is not. All terrorism falls under the category of political violence directed against noncombatants. But modern terrorism, born in the postwar world (before World War II terrorism consisted mainly of political assassination), has undergone a remarkable evolution. At least three distinct types are distinguishable, and each yields a radically different

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answer to the important questions about terrorism: where it comes from, how serious a threat it is, what should be done about it.

THE FIRST TYPE, which might be called classical terrorism, was an extension of war by other means. As practiced by the F.L.N. in Algeria and the N.L.F. in Vietnam, it differed from classical warfare by deliberately targeting civilians. The strategy was to demoralize the population, cause a collapse of public order, and hasten the capitulation of the government. The justification was weakness: against a foe superior in technology and power, attacking the defenseless was deemed a military necessity.

Of course, there were bloody-minded philosophers, like Sartre, who defended indiscriminate political murder (by the F.L.N.) with a touch of romance, as *existential* necessity: "To shoot down a European is to kill two birds with one stone, to destroy an oppressor and the man he oppresses at the same time: there remains a dead man and a free man." To which Michael Walzer responded that if Sartre were right and the only way for an Algerian to liberate himself was to kill a European, then the full liberation of Algeria should have required the importation of vast numbers of Frenchmen. By and large, however, except for the occasional Sartrean excursion into sophistry, military necessity—not philosophical authenticity—was the claim of classical terrorism.

By the end of the 1960s, when most of the globe had been decolonized and the wars of liberation won, there emerged an entirely new kind of terrorism: an extension of *politics* by other means. Its quintessential act was the P.L.O. airplane hijacking, its *reductio ad absurdum* the Moluccan train murders.

This new kind of terrorism differed from its classical forebear in three critical ways. First, *context*. Classical terrorism occurred in the midst of a war; the new kind occurred in the complete absence of real military confrontation. To compensate for that misfortune, the new terrorist often dressed himself up in the trappings of war. Hence, for example, the "communiqué." War was for him, alas, an aspiration only. Second, *objective*. Classical terrorism was designed to panic and demoralize; the new kind aimed to publicize. The P.L.O. seized planes to spread its name and its cause, not fear. In fact, some terrorists—like the Croatians who seized Yugoslav hostages and demanded that newspapers publish their manifesto, and nothing more—sought publicity only. Third, *audience*. In classical terrorism the victim, his class, and his kinsmen made up the audience. In the new terrorism there was a radical dissociation between the target of the violence and the target of the message. The P.L.O. hijackings were not addressed to the victims, not even to the enemy (Israel), but to the world. The content of the act was irrelevant. Only the form—violence, sudden and random—mattered. The attack itself lacked even symbolic purpose. It was a mere vehicle: the lure, the entertainment if you will, that earned the terrorist access to the world. This kind of terrorism was, at heart, pure media terrorism.

In this curious incarnation, terrorism became a form of political advertising. Barred from buying television time, the enterprising revolutionary decided to barter for it. Like the early commercial sponsors who produced their own television dramas in order to be able to show their ads, the media terrorists provided irresistible action—kidnapping and murder, live—in return for a chance to air their message.

The message was not lost on others with a cause and no army. In 1975 Moluccan terrorists hijacked a Dutch train, and, before the cameras, shot a random traveler and threw his body off the train. In a recent interview with *The Wall Street Journal*, one of the Moluccans explained: "We saw Arafat at the U.N. He was succeeding, and no one even knew about us." To be known: the raison d'être of media terrorism.

By the end of the 1970s, media terrorism was in decline. One reason was simple boredom. There are only so many variations on a theme, no matter how grisly, and it was becoming increasingly difficult to come up with new life-defying feats of derring-do to justify a camera crew.

Furthermore, the major practitioners of the art, and their causes, had by then already achieved international celebrity. Media terrorism had succeeded, but only as far as it could go. Being known doesn't win you anything; it prepares you to win. Arafat, for example, had now to *do* something with his renown. (He tried, in South Lebanon.)

But what finally did in media terrorism was the Iranian hostage crisis. Before Iran, there were many in the media who resisted the idea that they were partners in crime—unwilling, perhaps, but nevertheless indispensable—to the new terrorism. After Iran, the idea became obvious to all, even to the most devout believer in journalistic objectivity. Iran marked the dawn of a journalistic Heisenberg Principle—and of a higher order than in physics: observation not only could change reality, it could create it. That understanding marked the beginning of the end of media terrorism.

IN ITS PLACE has arisen in the 1980s yet another species: state-sponsored terrorism, an extension now (the echoes are more ancient) of *diplomacy* by other means. The means are assassination. The 1978 umbrella murder of Georgi Markov by Bulgarian agents in London was considered at the time a deplorable show of excessive zeal on the part of the Bulgarian secret services. It turned out to be target practice. Consider the events of this decade: the Rangoon bombing aimed at the entire political leadership of South Korea; the attempt on the life of the Pope; the attacks on Jordanian envoys on three continents by Syrian agents around the time of the Arafat-Hussein talks of 1983; the assassination of Bashir Gemayel, again by Syrian agents; the Kuwaiti bombings by Iranian agents; the shooting of a British policewoman from the Libyan Embassy. Applying the model of internal repression to foreign policy, state-sponsored terrorism declares the world to be its shooting gallery. Enemies of the people, never safe in

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the land of tyrants, are now denied asylum anywhere.

The elements of terror have changed again. The objective is neither panic nor publicity, but, purely and simply, the elimination of enemies, preferably enemy leaders. The audience? No audience. State-sponsored terror not only doesn't need journalists, it seeks to hide from them. It does not want the tangled route of plot and subplot to be followed back to national capitals. As for context, we are back to war: a bitter armistice in Korea; a "state of war" (to quote General Jaruzelski) in Poland; a series of wars between Syria and Jordan; Syria's war for Lebanon; an Arab-Persian, Sunni-Shiite war in the Persian Gulf; Libya's war against all. And, in London, cold war.

These are curiously old-fashioned inter-state wars. There is no pretense of decolonization or national liberation. The means are old-fashioned, too, a sinister throwback to the prehistory of terrorism, when the speciality was political assassination. But with a critical difference: now it is the work not of revolutionary idealists, like Camus's *Just Assassins*, but of the most cynical (often hired) thugs, acting in the name of the coldest realpolitik.

The rise of state-sponsored terrorism is worth noting because it radically alters the answers to the important questions about terrorism. First, it puts an end to the endless discussions of the last two decades about origins: hunger, poverty, disease, and oppression vs. subversion. For the new terrorism, the origin is a directive; the reason, a reason of state. Second, it provides a short answer to the question of the importance of terrorism: unlike its predecessors, a single act of the new terrorism has the potential to change history. (Consider how much American history was changed by the murder of John F. Kennedy.) And finally, it suggests that the old remedies—from counterinsurgency to land reform—are no longer relevant. The response must be at an international level: sanctions, boycott, quarantine, or worse. The new terrorism is war at long distance, and war is an inherently bilateral affair.

CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Fast times, slow book.

PLASTERED

NOT BY BOB WOODWARD

DAVID FELDMAN, the director of the "Dean Martin Show," was furious. It was 10:38 A.M. on February 2, 1969. The star of the show, the brilliantly talented singer and actor, Dean Martin, 53, was more than fifteen minutes late for the week's final taping. Martin had skyrocketed to stardom in the late 1940s with his then-partner, Jerry Lewis, and he had been part of the fast-lane world of show business ever since. Martin cultivated an image as a relaxed crooner who drank too much. It was just a comic pose, Feldman told himself, but at times like this, he wondered if there wasn't a kernel of truth in it. A big kernel.

IT WAS very nervy of Dean to bring his drinking habits in front of the camera, Feldman thought. Yet Martin always took risks for his art. That was what had made him the huge star he was today. He was an icon to millions, the cultural symbol of an entire generation. He was also hard to work with, unpredictable, undisciplined, lazy.

Feldman went to Dean's dressing room, and knocked on the door. There was no answer. He knocked again. There was still no answer. He knocked a third time. Again, no answer. Then he pushed opened the door and saw Dean Martin asleep on a red leather couch. A dog-eared movie script covered his face. The $48.57 (tax included) Sony TC-1109 clock radio was playing soft jazz, but the time it displayed was a half-hour slow. Martin had overslept again.

Why does Dean do this to himself? Feldman wondered. Liquor paraphernalia was everywhere. A cabinet door was left open, displaying a dozen empty glasses, already equipped with "swizzle sticks." The swizzle stick was used by experienced drinkers to "cut," or "stir," their liquor with water and other "mixers." Martin, Feldman knew, often used Canada Dry Club Soda for that purpose. He ordered it by the caseload. But he fooled no one.

In another corner of the room was what Martin called his "refreshment stand." It was a 3' by 5' brown oak cabinet. It offered visitors a brazen display of fourteen liquor bottles. There were bottles of bourbon, scotch, vermouth, white wines, gin—and most were completely filled. Martin made sure there were such "refreshment stands" wherever he stayed.

At the front of one shelf was a three-quarter filled bottle of Old Grand-Dad liquor. It was bottle #600567, manufactured by National Distillers and Chemical Corporation of New York, New York. Someone—presumably Martin, Feldman thought—had probably taken a drink from the bottle in the last twenty-four hours.

Feldman jostled his star awake.

"Get up, Dean," Feldman said. "You're late for shooting."

"Huh?" Martin said sleepily.

"Get up Dean," Feldman repeated.

"Whazzat? Huh?" Martin said.

"Time to get up," Feldman said.

Suddenly, Feldman found himself growing irritated. "Really, Dean, you shouldn't sleep so late," he said. "Were you out partying again last night?"

"Hey, baby, I can handle it," Martin said, stirring awake. He winked broadly and smiled.

Feldman couldn't help but smile back. There was something so lovable about Martin that made it hard to stay angry with him for long. Feldman knew he had done his best. As he walked back to the set, he saw Martin open up the refrigerator and take out a carton of milk. Behind it,

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poorly concealed, was a six-pack of Budweiser. Feldman shook his head. Dean Martin, he thought to himself, was incorrigible.

MARTIN ARRIVED in Las Vegas on February 25, 1969. He was in town for a "Dean Martin Roast" of his old friend, Frank Sinatra, the singer. The "roast" was also to be a reunion of the "Rat Pack," the celebrity drinking buddies who had partied together during the filming of *Oceans 11* in 1960. Sinatra, Martin, Peter Lawford, Sammy Davis Jr., and Joey Bishop had all shared many glasses of liquor together.

Their wild partying and zany antics had turned them into instant cult heroes. They became lasting influences on our society, experts said. And Martin was always the wildest of the group—one night during a cast party for *Oceans 11*, Joey Bishop recalled, Martin even put a lampshade on his head. There was no telling what Martin would do next, Bishop knew.

In recent years, they had all drifted apart. Bishop didn't know what to expect when he came into Martin's suite on the third floor of the Sands Hotel. Bishop thought Martin looked surprisingly well: his face was tanned and ruddy, and he was only a few pounds overweight. Despite rumors about his drinking, Martin still seemed indestructible.

"How about a little drinkie-winkie for old time's sake?" Martin said. He moved toward a row of bottles on top of a white bureau.

"Okay, Dean," Bishop said reluctantly. Perhaps by drinking with him a little bit, Bishop thought, he could make sure that Martin's drinking didn't get out of hand. Martin poured himself a jigger of J & B scotch, and gave one to Bishop.

"Joey," Dean said, "let's get the old 'Rat Pack' together again and paint the town red." That was a good idea, Bishop responded. It would be fun, he thought, and it would allow him to keep a careful eye on Martin.

Around midnight, Dean Martin walked into a private bar in the basement of the Sands Hotel. He was accompanied by the Rat Pack members, plus Don Rickles, the comedian.

The bar catered to the whims of celebrities such as Martin. No matter what drink they ordered, the bartender was able to prepare it—on the spot—from the bar's own supplies. When Martin arrived, there were 123 bottles of liquor, or "booze," arrayed in front of a 15' by 3' mirror. A few "regulars" sat on stools, waiting for their glasses to be refilled. The profits that were realized from this open trading in liquor were enormous. The hotel routinely marked up its drinks by 50 percent or more, and grossed $25,375 per week in this one bar alone. In a town as wide open as Las Vegas, there were 302 bars within the city limits. Martin could visit any one of them with impunity.

"I'd like a scotch, straight up," Martin said to the bartender, Chip Stevens, 32. "And give my father here anything he wants," he said, pointing to Peter Lawford. Martin and Lawford laughed at the joke.

Martin paid Stevens $4.92 for both drinks, including tax and tip.

Martin lifted the glass with his left hand and took a sip. After swallowing the liquor, he put the glass down on the table. Then he lifted up the glass with his right hand and took another swallow.

After finishing the drink, Martin said, "I'll have another." He slipped a $5 bill across the counter. "Keep the change," Martin added.

They left at 1:30 A.M. and walked down the street to the Flamingo Hotel bar. Martin walked straight up to the bartender, Frank Matthews, 31, and said, "I bet you don't get many kangaroos in here, do you?"

"No, we don't," Matthews said.

"Well, at these prices, you won't get many more!" It was an old joke well known to veteran drinkers. Matthews didn't think it was funny, but he laughed along to humor Martin.

Martin added, "You know, being a bartender, you must get a lot of people telling you their troubles." Matthews was shocked. Martin was surrounded by old friends, but the comment made him seem somehow lonely, vulnerable, pathetic. He seemed to be reaching out for comfort and help.

"I'll have a white wine spritzer," Martin finally said. The drink cost $3.10. Martin turned to Joey Bishop and said, "Do you want anything?"

"Sure, Dean, I'll have the same," Bishop said. Martin looked like he needed the company.

They finished their drinks. It was now 2:12 A.M. "That's it for me," Bishop said.

"Okay," Martin said. "Let's turn in. We've got a lot of work to do tomorrow." Weaving slightly, he waved goodbye to the Rat Pack and walked by himself back to Room 334 of the Sands Hotel.

Later that day, February 26, 1969, Martin called room service at 11:15 A.M. "I'd like an orange juice and coffee," he told switchboard operator Midge Sterns, 27. "I'd also like two scrambled eggs, and some toast with butter on the side." Before hanging up, he said, "And send me up some aspirin. My head hurts." Sterns would always remember that last request.

AT 10:35 A.M. on March 5, 1969, Dean Martin was awakened by a call at his Beverly Hills home. His wife was at her dresser putting pink Elizabeth Arden blusher on her right cheek. She thought that he looked better than he had in weeks. The roast had gone well, and he was feeling more confident. He was looking forward to this week's taping. The scheduled guest was the comedian Shecky Greene.

"Hello," Martin said, picking up the phone from his bedside table. It had an unlisted phone number—213-555-2368—known only to Hollywood's super-elite . "Who's this?" Martin said.

"Your director, Dean," Feldman said. "Why aren't you on the set?"

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"I overslept," Martin told Feldman. "I'm sorry."

"I've got bad news for you, Dean," Feldman said. "There's a problem."

"How bad?"

"Very bad," Feldman said. "Your Sinatra roast won't be shown until the summer."

Martin realized that a summer time slot would mean especially low ratings. He started sobbing.

"I knew something like this was going to happen. If this keeps up, you're going to get canceled,' " Feldman said. "You poor son of a bitch."

Dean Martin's furious descent and ruination had begun.

Postscript: What went wrong with Dean Martin? Who was responsible, if anyone? How did the Hollywood star system contribute to his undoing? The questions are legion, the answers few.

ART LEVINE

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Is the Iron Lady a straw man?

MAGGIE STAGGERS

Oxford

"MRS. THATCHER'S second government is stepping out to become Britain's most inept since the war. . . . No. 10 Downing Street, the epicentre of Britain's political life, is a curiously empty place. The prime minister flaps round its corridors like a solitary hawk looking for prey. . . . Since much of what is wrong with the government is rooted in the prime minister's personality it is hard to see what can be done about it." This extraordinary stream of opprobrium flowed neither from the soft-left *Guardian*, nor from the hard-left *New Statesman*, nor even from the new-left *Marxism Today*. It came instead from *The Economist*, which scarcely a year ago said it had "no doubt" about endorsing Thatcher's reelection. And it came on July 7, before the trouble *really* began.

By early July the Tory government's "mishaps, mistakes, and omissions," in *The Economist*'s words, had created problems with "farmers, miners, peers, local authorities, E.E.C. allies, even City financiers." During the next week, the value of sterling plunged to its lowest level ever, a decline only temporarily halted by a 2 percent jump in interest rates; the country's dockworkers went on strike, paralyzing 90 percent of British exports and imports; Thatcher was found by a high court to be the first British Prime Minister in history to have acted unlawfully—in a case of gratuitous union-bashing, she abolished the civil service union at the nation's intelligence headquarters; and the military government of Nigeria, a trading partner and former colony of Britain, kidnapped a rich, exiled opponent of the regime and tried to ship him back to Lagos in an airplane crate.

This latest series of worrisome and bizarre events may have distracted the British public from other recent Conservative failings: Thatcher's mishandling of Northern Ireland; her manifest inability to influence the Reagan Administration when disagreements arise, as they have over Grenada and Argentina; her defeat—in the House of Lords, no less—over an attempt to abolish the Labour-dominated Greater London Council without an election; and the embarrassment caused by the death of a British policewoman murdered in the heart of London by a sniper inside the Libyan Embassy (or rather, the Libyan "People's Bureau") who escaped punishment because of diplomatic immunity.

Suddenly the woman whom Ronald Reagan calls "the best man in Europe" looks beleaguered and unsteady. Her country's deepening crisis has two main sources. The first lies in the logic of Britain's postwar economic history, personified at its extreme by the radical leader of the mineworkers, Arthur Scargill. The second lies in the mixture of incompetence and overconfidence with which Thatcher has attempted to change that logic.

A SELF-DESCRIBED former Communist who remains closer to "Communist" than to "former," Scargill touched off the current crisis by declaring a miners' strike nearly five months ago. At first he seemed doomed to failure. Twice previously he had lost a national ballot of his union's members on whether to hold a strike. This year he simply disposed of the national ballot altogether, although a minority of miners in more prosperous pits, who objected to Scargill's move, continued to work.

For a while the Tories quietly delighted in the union's division. The miners had, after all, been largely responsible for the fall of Edward Heath's Conservative government in 1974, and Scargill is one of those people whose open declarations of class war lend a little credence to right-wing paranoia. Conservatives also marveled at Scargill's seeming stupidity: not only had he alienated a considerable part of his own union, he had actually waited until the end of the winter to cut off coal supplies. Many other union leaders, who secretly despise Scargill, were glad for the excuse to withhold complete solidarity. How could they offer full backing in the form of a general strike when a quarter of Scargill's own union was still at work?

But Scargill pressed on, and succeeded in sidestepping a ballot. He drew strength not only from his belief that industrial action in Britain can defeat an elected government and erect a socialist state, but also from the far-left majority on the union executive, and from his notorious "Red Guard," who attacked more moderate members as

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they went in to place their votes in favor of the ballot. Striking miners flocked to the areas of the country which declined to join the stoppage—so-called "flying pickets"—and the ugly specter of picket-line violence began to turn up on the nightly news. The Queen let it be known that she was not amused. In Nottinghamshire, the location of many modernized and profitable pits, mining families split down the middle with fathers and sons standing on opposite sides of the picket line.

The strikers themselves still have nothing to show for their sacrifices, and most analysts believe that no further reconciliation talks will occur until September. Yet Scargill currently appears much less inept. Should the strike continue, coal stocks will run down just as winter begins, a situation only partly mitigated by the pits remaining in operation. Happily for the government, the crippling dockworkers' strike—which started because non-union longshoremen were used to unload coal in defiance of the transport union's support for the miners—was settled after only a week. It had unnerved businesses and threatened to increase the leverage of the miners.

Essentially the government is hoping that miners will slowly drift back to work as the strike wears on, and is gambling that the coal stocks will not run out at the wrong time. Scargill, though, seems confident that the strikers will stay with him at least through the fall. Once the government is on the defensive, he calculates, other unions will join him on strike—as they did in the 1979 "winter of discontent," which set in motion the train of events that led to the fall of James Callaghan's Labour government.

OVER THE LAST five years Thatcher has fashioned strong anti-union legislation designed to avoid precisely the dilemma she now faces. The 1982 trade union law, for instance, bans "secondary action" such as the flying pickets and empowers courts to impound union funds in the event of an illegal strike. In other words, it permits governments to play divide-and-conquer in industrial warfare. Still, Thatcher has found Scargill a tougher adversary than expected. She doesn't dare to invoke the law for fear of inflaming the situation further, preferring to call up extra police and to let the National Coal Board, which runs the nationalized industry, give the appearance of dealing with the dispute alone.

The reason for this strategy is that Thatcher does not want to dignify the extra-parliamentary attack on her government by seeming to play a part in resolving the miners' crisis. She has pledged to reverse the postwar trend, common to Labour and Tory governments alike, of consulting Britain's powerful unions outside the parliamentary arena in order to keep the industrial peace. Her government "whinges" (the British colloquialism for "complains") that Scargill's motives are political, a thinly disguised assault on an elected government.

Of course, she is right. But what is anti-union legislation, and the decision not to invoke it, and indeed any economic policy at all, if not political? With the obvious intention of taming the miners, Thatcher appointed Ian MacGregor, a Floridian who several years ago succeeded in staring down British steelworkers, to head the National Coal Board. The mere sound of MacGregor's accent enrages miners and allows Scargill to exploit cheap anti-Americanism. More significantly, MacGregor's conduct during the strike has been ineffectual—as the putatively neutral Thatcher has told him in private meetings.

SCARGILL'S DEMANDS are ridiculous. He seeks a promise from the Coal Board to retract its plans to close twenty uneconomic pits and thereby throw twenty thousand miners out of work. But he also wants a promise not to close *any* pits on economic grounds. The miners already enjoy salaries and retirement and unemployment benefits that are generous compared to the rest of the work force, and British taxpayers have little sympathy with their demands. In fact, many workers resent the miners almost as much as they resent Thatcher, whose monetarist mania occasioned a severe recession which left three million unemployed.

Despite the miners' low public standing, Thatcher has nevertheless backed herself into a corner. If she conciliates Scargill and hands him a settlement that he can proclaim as a victory, she will only raise doubts about the viability of Britain's economic future. The new labor laws, helped by the recession's tendency to cow wage earners, have proved effective against weaker unions. But the main battle of Britain, as everyone realizes, involves the strongest unions. Should Scargill's intransigence seem vindicated, the perception that British labor problems remain chronic will take root among investors, and the other unions will reassert themselves.

On the other hand, if Mrs. Thatcher sticks to the confrontational posture on which she prides herself, she risks a full-scale economic fiasco—and perhaps a political disaster as well. She threatened to use emergency powers and call out the army to open British ports before the dock strike ended, and she recently described the miners as "the enemy within" who must be defeated in the same way "the enemy without" was defeated in the Falklands. It is a measure of desperation when a British Prime Minister equates her own country's trade unions with the authoritarian dictatorship of Argentina. More to the point, Thatcher has raised the stakes in such a way that Scargill cannot lose. Because she has pledged herself to total annihilation of the miner's union, any settlement (indeed, the mere survival of the union) will be seen as a victory for radicalism. Up to now the Labour Party has acted cautiously toward Scargill. Its leaders know that prolonged strikes hurt the party's standing in the country at large. But as soon as the unions and the Labour Party sense that Thatcher has lost her grip, they will escalate industrial disruption.

There is a tendency here to view Thatcher and Scargill as mirror-image radicals of the far right and far left. But

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the comparison doesn't quite stand up. First, unlike Scargill, Thatcher underestimated the strength of her opponent. She is now discovering that the structure of the postwar British economy will not allow her to remain above the industrial fray. General election victories will not make British unions magically disappear. Punitive anti-union policies and harsh anti-union rhetoric only embitter workers and embolden their sometimes unrepresentative leaders to strive for revenge. All along Thatcher has implicitly been challenging the unions to a fight. Now that she has what she wanted, she has withdrawn in the mystical hope that her opponents in Nottinghamshire will self-destruct just as her opponents in the Falklands did. The other difference between Thatcher and Scargill is that whereas she has fairly won two national elections, he has assured his survival by dispensing with his own union's elections. And for good reason, from his perspective: his goals and tactics are as distrusted within some sections of his union as they are within Britain as a whole.

It may well be that no government could deal reasonably with someone like Scargill, a man who talks ominously of revolution, and who has made himself, in Bonapartist fashion, President for Life. Yet only one year after a crushing electoral victory, Thatcher has achieved the remarkable feat of strengthening the hand of the highly unpopular Scargill. With every passing day, the suspicion grows that the leader once dubbed the Iron Lady (by *Pravda*, not *The Economist*) is in fact made of straw.

LAURENCE GRAFSTEIN

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Can El Salvador's new president stanch the bleeding?

DUARTE'S SECOND CHANCE

BY GUY GUGLIOTTA

THROUGHOUT his political career José Napoleón Duarte, like all public figures in El Salvador, has come to accept the fact that a great many of his own countrymen would welcome his death. Hecklers have shouted obscenities at him, ill-wishers have shoved him, students have spat on him, and opponents have threatened him with murder. The left has damned him as a fascist and a bloody butcher, the right has damned him as a Communist, erstwhile friends have damned him as an arrogant blowhard and a hack. Duarte receives letters, telephone calls, and *billets-doux* festooned with alarming slogans and mysterious symbols. Yet none of this has dampened his ambitions.

On June 1 Duarte took office as the first civilian in half a century to win a reasonably straight presidential election in El Salvador. Considering the civil war, the electoral confusion, guerrilla disruptions, and the general loathing that pervades this badly divided nation, it was an easy victory. His opponent, Roberto d'Aubuisson, the kinetic, chain-smoking anti-Communist with suspected links to right-wing death squads, received 46 percent of the vote to Duarte's 54 percent. In the aftermath, some analysts (mostly foreigners) suggested that d'Aubuisson's showing entitled his people to a share of the government "in the interest of national unity," to "heal the wounds." But in El Salvador, as elsewhere, an 8 point victory is a stomping. D'Aubuisson's people will have to look for crumbs.

Duarte's victory, welcomed by democratic countries everywhere, was greeted with exuberance by the Reagan Administration. Two years ago, when Duarte was allied with the military in a junta government, critics of U.S. policy in Central America vilified him as the armed forces' ineffective, handwringing shill; after the elections he re-emerged as democracy's champion, the "moderate" who would save the nation from the ideologues of the extreme right and the extreme left. The Reagan Administration felt vindicated. In a pre-inauguration visit to Washington, Duarte chatted with Reagan and lobbied Congress like a pro, seeking military aid to "help democracy, to solve problems, to look for peace, and to establish justice and liberty for our people." During his meetings with members of Congress there was not a word in public about killing guerrillas, which is what military aid is all about. For the first time speaking from a position of strength, as the democratically elected President of El Salvador, Duarte repeatedly told the Congressmen that with their assistance he could tame the army, negotiate a peace, and end the war. Duarte's English—which often deserts him in trying times—was superb. On May 24, two days after Duarte's visit, the House

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voted in favor of a $61.7 million military aid bill for El Salvador, on which it had stalled for months. House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, an opponent of the bill, conceded before the vote, "There is no doubt in my mind that Duarte is a very impressive man with great courage and bravery, and with that he has sold enough people in the House to get this aid." In late July Duarte returned to Washington and played to equally favorable reviews, emphasizing his membership in the world's democratic family.

Still, in order to sustain U.S. support throughout his five years in office, Duarte will have to convince Congress that he is making steady progress in fighting the war, in curbing human rights abuses, in bringing the army under control, in revamping the justice system, and in pursuing agrarian reform. The emphasis changes, depending on the Administration and the political exigencies of the day, but the progress principle remains. In the event of stalemate—or worse, reversal—in one or more areas of U.S. interest (a major battle lost, large numbers of civilian deaths at the hands of the army, another bridge destroyed), Congress will call Duarte to account. He has no choice. For the foreseeable future, Duarte's government will survive at gringo whim.

IN HIS FIRST few months he has done well. His predecessor, the army-appointed interim president, Alvaro Magaña, set him up nicely by transferring Treasury Police Chief Colonel Nicolás Carranza and former National Guard Intelligence boss Lieutenant Colonel Mario Denis Morán to diplomatic posts abroad. Both men had enduring reputations as military hard-liners and had been dodging charges of human rights abuse for years. The transfer of two officers may seem like a negligible move, but such changes are not to be lightly dismissed. In Latin American military governments like El Salvador's, where the armed forces sees itself as "reformist"—engaged in a crusade against communism—civilians are regarded as untrustworthy meddlers. By shifting Carranza and Morán, Magaña was smoothing the way for Duarte to serve as commander-in-chief in fact as well as in name.

Once in office, Duarte quickly moved to put his own stamp on military affairs. On June 4 former Treasury Police Chief Colonel Francisco Antonio Morán, another hard-liner once branded by Duarte as "an enemy of the Christian Democratic Party," resigned as director of the state power commission. He was replaced by retired General Jaime Abdul Gutierrez, a former army chief, a close Duarte associate, and a leading exponent of agrarian reform within the military establishment. A week later the Treasury Police's S-2 intelligence unit, regarded by many moderates as little more than a tarted-up death squad, was disbanded. Both the departure of Colonel Morán and the abolition of S-2 were portrayed as internal administrative matters of the armed forces, but Gutierrez is Duarte's man, and the Treasury Police have never been Duarte's favorites. Still, it is too early to tell how successful the new commander-in-chief will ultimately be in asserting his authority. In June Duarte was still trading on his election victory. The real tests may not come for months or years, and will likely depend principally on the course of the war and the military's performance in it.

Another event eased Duarte's transition to power: on May 24 five Salvadoran National Guardsmen were convicted in the 1980 murders of four U.S. churchwomen. For three-and-a-half years this notorious affair, known generally as "the nuns case," turned civil rights abuses in El Salvador into a cause célèbre in Congress. Although the convictions did not address the question of whether military higher-ups, particularly Defense Minister General Eugenio Vides Casanova, were involved in concealing evidence, the partial resolution of the case was enough to temporarily ease the pressure in Congress. Nevertheless, the churchwomen were only four among tens of thousands of noncombatants who have been murdered in El Salvador over the past five years. A verdict in the nuns case may have had a handsome public relations impact in the United States, but its general effect on violence in El Salvador itself is so modest as to be irrelevant.

The only area in which Duarte's supporters abroad may have been been disappointed is in the matter of a negotiated settlement with El Salvador's Marxist-led guerrillas. As the moderate candidate, Duarte was touted during the campaign as more dialogue-minded than the intransigent d'Aubuisson. But whatever his private views, in his inauguration speech Duarte promoted the classic tough stance of no dialogue that "implies discussing the sharing of power with weapons plunked on the table." There is nothing inconsistent here, with either military or Christian Democratic Party doctrine. For years the guerrillas have offered cease-fires and power-sharing as preliminary steps to end the war. The Salvadoran government, with Duarte or without him, has consistently refused to negotiate. Power-sharing with Marxist guerrillas has had scant success in the region (many non-Marxists left Nicaragua's military government when the leadership moved sharply to the left). The government's stance—and Duarte's—has been that the guerrillas must lay down their guns and join an electoral process set up by the government. For the guerrilla movement, the problem with this stance is that it may mean both literal and figurative suicide. Literal because leftists could not campaign in El Salvador without getting murdered, and figurative because no one thinks they could win an election anyway. The left cannot afford to lose an election, and the U.S. government would never allow it to win. The government can thus offer it as an option knowing that the left will never pick up the challenge.

WHAT IS new and more important in the political balance between the government and the left is the fact that Duarte, as El Salvador's elected president, now has credentials for legitimacy unmatched by anyone on the left, on the right, in the armed forces, or anywhere else. He has some political power and should get more as he cements control of the government. More significantly, he also has moral authority—a new and perhaps vital weapon in El Salvador's bloody struggle. Before this year,

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the guerrillas could always claim that they had as much right to exist in El Salvador as any military-dominated government. Now Duarte has won an election—an imperfect election, to be sure, but an election nevertheless. The guerrillas have lost moral ground, a trifling matter in the military scheme of things, but tremendously important for a movement whose biggest propaganda argument is the rightness of its cause. To recoup, they have two alternatives. They must "re-legitimize" themselves, either through important battlefield victories or by waiting for Duarte's government to disgrace itself, or they must play by Duarte's rules. Thus far the guerrillas have failed to understand that El Salvador today is Duarte's game, despite the constraints imposed by the United States and the touchy and as yet unresolved relationship with the armed forces.

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

It has taken Duarte twenty-five years to get this far, and he is not one to underestimate his talents. During the presidential campaign, when d'Aubuisson—the news media's prince of darkness—was getting all the coverage, Duarte said simply, "The international media look for news, and d'Aubuisson is news. I am the hope of everyone and the opponent of d'Aubuisson." The son of a not particularly successful San Salvador tailor, Duarte went to Catholic schools, joined the Boy Scouts when he was 10, and played basketball—so well that he was once selected for the national team. Later he would say that the Scout motto, "To Serve God, Country, and My Fellow Man," became "the center of my life." Duarte has always relentlessly pursued his interests. At first it was the Boy Scouts and basketball. Later it was Christian Democracy and public service. Finally, it would be the presidency. "When I find something I'm interested in," Duarte said, "I have to know everything about it."

If you like Duarte, his single-mindedness and football coach ebullience can be cause for both amusement and admiration. One of his oldest and most trusted aides, legislative Deputy Guillermo Antonio Guevara Lacayo, remembers life as a City Hall legal clerk when Duarte was mayor of San Salvador. It was a time of "long hours, very long hours." Guevara Lacayo does not recall many mistakes, but Duarte made him pay for every one, "making me do the work over again and again, until I got it right."

If you don't like Duarte, however, his willfulness becomes a source of rage. Onetime associates like Jorge Villacorta, a former junior minister who walked out of the government in the early 1980s (along with many prominent left Christian Democrats) to join the political front of the Salvadoran guerrilla movement, speaks of his old boss as "an egomaniac, the 'main man' who has to run everything." The adjective that his enemies most commonly use to describe him is *soberbio*, a rough equivalent of both "arrogant" and "self-righteous."

Duarte's physique reinforces his personality. Now 58 years old, he is about 5'8" tall, but so wide in the shoulders and deep in the chest that he looks shorter, a pocket-sized version of a National Football League linebacker. His posture, like his English, is often an indication of his state of mind. Two years ago, when Christian Democratic fortunes were at a low ebb, Duarte was pasty-faced and jowly, cloudy-eyed with a sagging waistline. This year, as the campaign and polls began to show that d'Aubuisson wasn't going to give him anything to worry about, he began almost visibly to inflate: his suntan deepened, his smile broadened, and he began bounding from place to place, his arms sweeping broad circles through the air, his raspy baritone dropping to a foghorn bellow. After the first-round election in March gave him an unbridgeable 13-point lead over d'Aubuisson, Duarte resumed bilingual press conferences, giving verbatim translations of his own quotes for as long as anyone wanted to listen.

Still, it was perhaps luck as much as aggressiveness which determined Duarte's future. In 1943 his father won 50,000 Colones ($20,000) in the national lottery, with which he built a house, changed professions, and sent his

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son to college in the United States. At Notre Dame, Duarte studied civil engineering, learned English, played intramural sports, and struck up a friendship with his religion professor, the Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, now the university's president. When he returned to El Salvador four years later, he was *Ingeniero* Duarte, or "Engineer Duarte," a professional and a man to respect. Duarte married a young woman named Ines Duran, and throughout most of the 1950s he worked in partnership with his father-in-law as a civil engineer and architect. A teetotalling family man, he eventually became the father of six children. Duarte was active in businessman's clubs, but had never considered politics. Then, in 1960, friends invited him to meet a small group of men interested in forming a Christian Democratic Party.

Christian Democracy, with its emphases on Catholic conscience, social action, and anticommunism, was a natural ideological step for an adherent of the teachings of Sir Robert Baden-Powell and the priests of Notre Dame. Duarte was elected the secretary general. He read everything he could find on the international movement and became its leading Salvadoran prophet and organizer. In twelve years the Christian Democrats grew to be the most powerful party in El Salvador, and Duarte became the most formidable politician his country had ever produced.

He started with all the natural gifts: limitless energy, gregariousness, a thick skin, a short memory, a large ego. He was also an *ingeniero*, and popular with women, especially mothers—he was a good boy and a *macho*. But this is the stuff of which all Latin American politicians are said to be made. In fact, Duarte won elections—three times as mayor of San Salvador before he got into presidential politics—for two very simple and sound political reasons. He had a terrific organization, and he gave people what they wanted.

TODAY the slum barrios that ring San Salvador still have many of the same Christian Democrat precinct captains who were installed by Duarte twenty years ago. The captains' tally books list every voter in the district. The captains chat these people up constantly, dun them for contributions, and badger them in countless tiny ways. When the cops come around to meddle in neighborhood affairs, the captain is there to speak for his constituency; when the death squads come pounding on the door at 5 A.M., it is the captain who goes to the *cuartel* (the authorities) to ask questions. Sometimes when the death squad comes, the captain dies; dozens of prominent Christian Democrats were murdered by the death squads in 1980 and 1981. And when election day arrives, the captain makes sure everyone votes, even if he has to personally escort his people through a guerrilla firefight. It happened repeatedly during the 1982 Constituent Assembly elections. People remember this kind of thing.

They also remember that when Duarte was mayor—for three consecutive two-year terms between 1966 and 1972—you could go down to City Hall, knock on the door, complain about lousy health care in your district, and expect something to happen. Practically everybody in the slums seems to have a story like this. The message heard over and over is that "*Ingeniero* Duarte cares about poor people." They say this not only because Duarte tells them he cares, but because he has a twenty-year record to prove it. No other politician in El Salvador has such a record, and certainly not d'Aubuisson, a cashiered major in army intelligence who rose to political prominence by denouncing leftists. In the slums, people believe that d'Aubuisson is allied with the death squads and the army. This means he gets few votes.

BY MARCH 1972 Duarte was the most popular man in the country, and he was running for president against the official National Conciliation Party's candidate, Colonel Arturo Molina. Early returns put Molina ahead, but when totals started to come in from populous areas, Duarte quickly surged. He was leading by a margin of 2 to 1 when the government stopped broadcasting the results. The next day it was announced that Molina had finished first. A few days later the legislative assembly pronounced him president.

The Christian Democrats cried fraud, but let the matter lie quietly until April 25, when dissident military officers took over two garrisons and attempted a coup. The rebels asked for Duarte's support, and he agreed to speak up for them in a radio broadcast. He then headed for the house of a Venezuelan diplomat, where he thought he would be able to take asylum. He had just finished eating when seven plainclothes policemen broke into the house, grabbed him, and started beating him. They dragged him outside, put a hood over his head, threw him in the back seat of a car, and drove away, clubbing him in the face with a gun butt. He was taken to a cell at National Police headquarters. Three days later he was released, after Theodore Hesburgh coordinated a telephone and telegram campaign on Duarte's behalf in the United States, Europe, and Latin America. With two black eyes and ears ringing, Duarte was flown to Guatemala, then Miami, and finally to exile in Venezuela.

The affair of the botched presidential election has come to be regarded by some as the seminal event in El Salvador's cycle of violence and repression, but at the time it was seen as just another violent interlude in a place where nothing but coups were ever really worth reporting. As the guerrillas are quick to point out, Duarte was never a friend of Marxism, or even a fellow traveler, notwithstanding rightist charges in 1972 and today that his social reformism makes him a Communist. At the same time, the leftist contention that Duarte is a fascist is also wrong. Although Christian Democrats are not loath to make common cause with the armed forces, neither Duarte nor anyone else in his party could be said to advocate militarism or corporatism in any form. The 1972 attempted coup and Duarte's subsequent exile had little to do with today's bloody left-right polarization, and a lot to do with the traditional and now largely historical conflict between the military-oligarchy establishment and an ever more vigorous Christian Democracy trying to elbow it out of the way.

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Duarte is a "centrist" or a "moderate" not only by definition, but also because neither the right nor the left will claim him as its own.

Duarte spent seven-and-a-half years in exile, acquiring international stature as a Christian Democrat, plying his trade as an engineer, and biding his time while his homeland gradually fell apart. It was during this period, in 1977, that he caught his right hand in a cement compacter and lost a knuckle from each of three fingers. Later the legend would circulate that the damage was caused by police torture in 1972.

DUARTE returned to El Salvador on October 25, 1979, ten days after young army officers overthrew the government of General Carlos Humberto Romero, Molina's successor, and set up a civilian-military junta in hopes of staving off civil war through reform. This government, now known as "the first junta," folded after six weeks, many members disappointed at its inability to control the armed forces. Social democrats and other leftist reformers who had participated in the junta government began the march that eventually led many of them to ally themselves with the guerrillas. Guillermo Manuel Ungo, leader of El Salvador's tiny social democratic party (the National Revolutionary Movement) and spokesman for the guerrilla left's political arm, was a member of the first junta.

The Christian Democrats, still strong, still cohesive, but still bystanders, decided that now was the time to enter the government. Duarte today claims he opposed the decision, along with his friend and party co-founder Julio Adolfo Rey Prendes, but that he was overruled. At the time Rey Prendes said he felt that if the Christian Democrats aligned themselves with the armed forces, "we would win the war but destroy the party." So far, he has turned out to be wrong on both counts.

Duarte eventually joined the junta and later served as its president for seventeen months, the civilian front man for what was essentially a U.S.-backed military regime. It was during this period, between 1980 and 1982, that the Christian Democrats, as Duarte put it, "lost our virginity." The assassination of San Salvador Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, the nuns affair, and other atrocities beyond number all happened on the Christian Democrats' watch. Duarte's once-gleaming escutcheon acquired stains. He came to be seen as an apologist for the military and a mealymouthed temporizer, his speeches about democracy ridiculed as the ramblings of a political has-been terminally compromised by the armed forces. The chapter closed with the 1982 Constituent Assembly elections, a political and propaganda tour de force because of the electorate's courage in the midst of war, but a near disaster for the Christian Democrats. The party won twenty-four of sixty Assembly seats—more than anyone else—but almost got frozen out of the government altogether by an ad hoc coalition of rightist adversaries.

Today it is unclear whether the redemption of Christian Democracy has been achieved because of Duarte or in spite of him. In 1982, as titular chief of state, Duarte could not campaign, but the party received almost the same percentage of the votes as Duarte received in the first round of presidential voting this year. The party organization, which survived Duarte's exile and the repression of the early 1980s, has proved as tenacious as ever. Finally, it is not clear whether the agreement forged at the beginning of the presidential campaign between the party and a 500,000-member worker-campesino alliance—beneficiaries of the juntas' land reforms—was a vote of confidence in Duarte or in the Christian Democrats as a whole.

During his campaign Duarte spoke of a "social pact" between his government and the voters of El Salvador, marrying personal initiative with government assistance "to unite us in a national effort." What Duarte has in mind is national integration—giving little people a stake in the future of a country that has known nothing but yesterday's feudalism and today's chaos. Unfortunately for these noble sentiments, only chaos looms in the immediate future. Duarte's campaign may have been committed to preserving the land reform, getting rid of the death squads, and organizing an integrated socioeconomic "development program," but all of these plans are hostages to the civil war. Duarte will not agree to power-sharing, the guerrillas will not participate in elections. There is little left to do but fight on.

Or tip the balance. Compared to the military, Duarte has little leverage in the war at home, but he has shown unexpected strength abroad, not only during his triumphant debut in Washington, but also in Europe, where sympathy for the guerrilla cause has long been broad and deep. Duarte's success last month in negotiating between $18 and $19 million in aid during a visit to Christian Democratic West Germany marked the first propaganda victory for the Salvadoran government in Europe since the civil war began. He also won prestige when Mexico, in the past a powerful and frequent supporter of the Salvadoran left, sent Foreign Minister Bernardo Sepúlveda to the June 1 inauguration. Like military reform, however, fence-mending with Europe and Mexico is likely to be a long process, subject to reconsideration and setbacks. The key questions for Duarte here, as in the United States, are likely to be "Is he winning?" and "Is he keeping his hands clean?"

Even if his progress reports are satisfactory and Duarte survives five years in office, he will find himself called upon to play still another new role. Many fragile Latin American political systems have foundered because of strong leaders who overstayed their welcome, and the test of elder statesman may well prove to be the gravest of all for Duarte. Christian Democracy's resilience during a quarter-century of political turbulence suggests that the party and its ideology are greater than the leader. But Duarte's handy re-emergence after one-and-a-half years of washing the military's filthy laundry hints that he may have the caudillo's touch—that the masses will always forgive him his sins. When the time comes, he should note that history will judge him, at least in part, on his willingness to step down. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Dark and a Few Lights

Listen, we are calling you back. Driven out
You must now return. The country
Out of which you were driven flowed once
With milk and honey. You are being called back
To a country that has been destroyed.
And we have nothing more
To offer you than the fact that you are needed.

Thus, in 1950, Bertolt Brecht, back in Berlin, in his poem "To the Actor P. L. in Exile." But, like much in Brecht's life, the poem is paradoxical. Though Peter Lorre had not returned to the German stage, he was no longer in exile: he was at the moment living in Bavaria; and he had already returned to (West) Germany to make a film that was released the following year. That film, *The Lost One*, has lived up to its name: it had its first U.S. showing at Filmex in Los Angeles last year and has just had its U.S. theatrical première at the Film Forum in New York.

The Lost One
(Film Corp.)

The Muppets Take Manhattan
(Tri-Star)

Ghostbusters
(Columbia)

Top Secret!
(Paramount)

It's a disappointment, not nearly worth Lotte Eisner's praise in *The Haunted Screen*, but it's a poignant occasion in a poignant life. Lorre, as is unknown to the world that thought him a Hollywood freak, was a serious and experienced theater actor before he went into films. Born in Hungary (as Laszlo Löwenstein), trained in Vienna, he made his Berlin debut in 1929, aged 25. Brecht had a hand in that debut and soon used Lorre in his own plays. Lang saw the debut and ticketed Lorre for *M*. (I've always thought that Brecht was an unseen presence in *M*, both in stimulation of the script and in the directing of Lorre's performance.)

After a few more German films, Lorre emigrated to England in 1933 and was soon launched on his "monster" career in *The Man Who Knew Too Much*. He went to Hollywood and quickly succeeded in a line of bizarre roles. By the time the refugee Brecht arrived in 1941, Lorre was rich and very helpful. But self-disgust (apparently) had made him a morphine addict; this and other factors severely affected his film success. He had to take other steps to keep working. Out of need but also because, it seems clear, he wanted to do some anointing of a troubled conscience, he returned to Germany, found likely film material and a producer, collaborated on a script, directed, and played the leading role.

The Lost One is based on the true story of a certain Dr. Rothe, a German immunologist who had murdered his fiancée in 1943 on suspicion that she was conveying his experiments to the British. He formed a habit of murdering women. Most of the film takes place after the war (with many flashbacks) in a refugee camp near Hamburg where the doctor is now working with an assistant—the former Gestapo official who covered up the doctor's first murder. The past haunts the doctor, and after considerable torment he finds his way out through several deaths, including his own.

What a pleasure it would be to help celebrate the discovery of a lost gem, to help certify posthumously the act of personal reclamation that Lorre intended. But the film is heavy, slow, cinematically trite. The reminders of *M* are frequent and funereal. Lorre's direction is clumsily imitative of early Fritz Lang. Worst of all, the psychological and moral dramas in the story are never clarified and fulfilled. The tone is assumptive, as if the film were saying "You know the sort of anguish we mean." Too much of what we see comes down to Lorre, as the doctor, smoking cigarettes and pacing silently amidst the shadows.

Still it's Lorre himself who is the one interesting feature. Here is a man who had spent many years playing supporting roles coming again to the center. The frustration of the film is that he gives a screen-filling performance, even with touches of the sadly romantic. But he needed a better director and a better script. Lorre was in fact something of a writer. (He is rumored to have collaborated with Brecht on some lost poems. Brecht thought he was the best reader of German poetry in the world.) But this script is a misfire.

Lorre didn't accept the invitation in Brecht's poem. His Hollywood career picked up again—possibly as a result of his work in *The Lost One*, which otherwise had no success. He made eighteen more American films, one of which, *Beat the Devil*, was worth his talent. He died in 1964 of a heart seizure.

I once went to a party with the first business tycoon I ever met. The host handed him a shot of whiskey and apologized because he had run out of his good stuff. The tycoon growled, "Hell, there's no such thing as *bad* whiskey."

FILMS WORTH SEEING

After the Rehearsal. A master theater-and-film director, Ingmar Bergman, reflects, on film, about the theater. Breathtakingly skillful, deeply absorbing. (Reviewed 6/25/84)

Another Country. First-class acting and production, pungent dialogue, but inadequate resolution in this English public school "explanation" of Burgess-McLean types. (7/9/84)

The Bostonians. Vanessa Redgrave as Olive Chancellor is beautiful and true. Costumes and photography are ravishing. But, largely because the Verena is a null, Henry James's novel is dim. (8/6/84)

The Natural. Bernard Malamud's baseball novel drastically adapted for Robert Redford's use, but he really uses it. (6/11/84)

SK

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I feel much the same about Muppet films. I suppose they could appear in a film so badly made that it impeded them, but my only real requirement is that I get plentiful chances to see them. My only real complaint about *The Muppets Take Manhattan* is that we don't see enough of all of them, particularly in musical numbers.

The new film is, I suppose, weaker than the last one, which was weaker than the first one. By weaker, I mean that the action isn't spread around enough among all the company and that the songs are a bit too tinkly. (Also, one real mistake: not even Jim Henson and Frank Oz, the presiding magicians of the Muppets, can make rats cute, not even in Muppet form. No more rats, please.) Also, some of the script carpentering is more laborious than whimsical.

In this one, the Muppets have just put on the senior show at their college and, after graduation, bring the show to New York to get it produced on Broadway. Disappointments, of course. They have a tough time, have to go separate ways, and are just about to give up when a young man—son of a producer who had turned them down—suddenly decides to do their show. And, suddenly, Kermit is hit by a taxi and gets amnesia—to stretch a few more minutes out of the running time and to whoop up a Big Finish. No one would want the next film to be good by any standards other than Muppet ones; I just don't want to be distracted from the unreal by the laboriously real.

Meanwhile, Muppet-makers all, thanks.

In the great *Ghostbusters* vs. *Top Secret!* war that is now raging—well, not exactly *raging*—I side with *Top Secret!*, because it satirizes subjects that are more interesting to me and because it's too long since I endorsed a film with an exclamation point in its title. The basic space-fantasy and spirit-world material of *Ghostbusters* is itself parodic to me, when it isn't dull. *Top Secret!* parodies spy pictures, so it has a better launching pad.

The makers of *Airplane!* made *Top Secret!*—Jim Abrahams!, David Zucker!, and Jerry Zucker!, plus Martyn Burke, whose punctuation is still undecided. The scene of the new one is East Germany, and the tone is James Bond unbonded. It doesn't have as many laughs as the first picture but—and this is possibly more important—even when you're not actually laughing, you feel that it's the work of bright, funny people. The structure is, as Sam Goldwyn might have said, pretty hap and hazard; the two young lovers are simply awful (which may secretly be the point); and occasionally one just has to be patient with the film for a moment or two. Then it gets bright again.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Epilogue to Anger

Even in passing, Lillian Hellman engendered controversy—people disputed her age at the time of death. A well-respected playwright and Hollywood screenwriter whose confrontation with the House Un-American Activities Committee in the 1950s was legendary, she survived the penury of the blacklist to establish herself, late in life, in a new career, as the author of a beautifully written series of impressionistic memoirs. This brought renewed fame, wealth, and the respect of the literary community, besides making her a model for independent women everywhere. It also, inevitably, made her the focus of renewed contention. A former friend, Diana Trilling, angered by Hellman's rash imputations regarding her own and her husband Lionel's relation to McCarthyism, wrote a rebuttal in a memoir of her own. Its rejection by the publisher they shared inspired new accusations (denied by Hellman) that she had blocked the book. Others accused her of distortion and misrepresentation. And on the Dick Cavett show, Mary McCarthy delivered her scathing judgment that Lillian had never written a truthful word in her life, including "and" and "the." This

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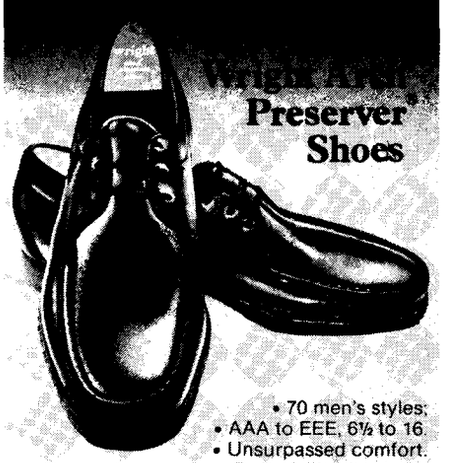

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brought a libel suit in response.

Previously characterized by enemies as a fellow traveler who continued to embrace Stalinism long after most other American intellectuals had abandoned it, Lillian was now being called a liar and a bully. Herself a victim of blacklisting, she was now thought to be engaged in muffling the free expression of others, leading some to say that she embraced the First Amendment only in her own defense. It was a miserable epilogue to what should have been a respected old age. Although she continued to be an inspiration to the radical young and gifted women (Marsha Norman was among those who testified to Lillian's seminal influence on her playwriting), she was embroiled at the end in bitter quarrels and troublesome litigation with dozens of people, many of them former friends.

MUCH as they saddened those who loved her, these broils, I believe, are what kept her alive. Stricken first by blindness, and then—chain-smoking to the end—by emphysema, heart attacks, paralysis, a stroke, and the loss of her dearest friend and close companion Hannah Weinstein, Lillian Hellman was dying for over four years, fighting death with mounting rage and determination. Her friends watched her grow frailer and feebler from month to month, fearing that each would be her last; yet every June she returned to Martha's Vineyard after a winter of illness to hold a joint birthday party with John Hersey and Kingman Brewster, even though she had to be carried into the house, placed in a chair, and fed her food. Two years ago her pacemaker popped out of her chest—by this time her skin had become like papier-maché—but before it could be replaced she had to have carotid arteries operated on in her throat. She was now anorexic and nearly died from malnutrition, a bedridden Job imprisoned inside a broken bag of bones; yet a day before the operation she insisted on putting on some makeup, leaving the hospital, and cooking two geese for a friend's dinner in Boston.

She hated death; she defied it, and she kept it at bay through blind fury. I had an image of her blood congealing, and then set coursing through her veins again by means of her reaction to some new outrage, real or invented. She quarreled with everyone, often over the most trivial issue—she broke with Bill Styron for an entire summer in a dispute over the proper way to cook a ham. She even had a quarrel with her "adopted son," Peter Feibleman, the mildest of men, whom she had known and loved for forty-three years. In a touching graveside eulogy, Feibleman reported the opinions of her nurse: "This lady is half-paralyzed; she's legally blind; she's having rage attacks that are a result of strokes; she has no way of stopping. She says things to people she doesn't necessarily mean and then she regrets them. She cries at night; she can't help that. She can't eat. She can't sleep. She can't walk. . . . I think, frankly, she's dying" (to which Lillian added, when asked how she was feeling, "Not good, Peter. . . . This is the worst case of writer's block I ever had").

But the rages which the nurse attributed to her physical condition, her closest male friend, John Hersey, interpreted as "a rage of the mind against all kinds of injustice—against human injustice and the unfairness of death." Before the onset of pain and illness, her anger was more focused; after, it became a free-floating, cloud-swollen tempest that rained on friend and foe alike.

BUT throughout her life, even near the end, she remained the most hospitable of women, the most gracious of friends. An inspired cook, though she barely tasted her own dishes, she loved to see her guests well fed (another birthday party had been scheduled and postponed just days before she died). It was this almost maternal preoccupation with nourishment which attracted you regardless of political differences or momentary conflicts; and, anyway, her opinions were really irrelevant to her friendship, except as a pretext to start a fight. (The conservative columnist Joseph Alsop was one of her oldest comrades.) For this reason, I guess, I never took Lillian's politics very seriously, and was always amazed when people, particularly American intellectuals still waging fifty-year-old wars, treated her as a dangerous political thinker.

Lillian's opinions were a channel for her feisty, sharp, satiric nature; I think she was more interested in personalities than issues. Lillian liked nothing better than to fish, and, while sitting in the boat with her line on the bottom waiting for a fluke to bite or a rock bass, to gossip about the frailties of acquaintances. She responded to warmth and thoughtfulness with the gratitude of a childless woman who invested all her emotions in friends, but she went straight to someone's weaknesses with the eye of a peregrine falcon pouncing on a sparrow. What her enemies saw were the envenomed talons, not the warm heart. "Forgive me," she would always say, before discharging an eloquent fusillade of contradiction concerning some innocent remark by one of her guests. But I think she truly wanted forgiveness for whatever wounds her opinionated nature inflicted.

AS A playwright, Lillian wrote eight original dramas and four adaptations, before abandoning the stage in the early '60s. Although none are of the first rank, at least three, I believe, have a permanent place in American drama: *Toys in the Attic*, *The Autumn Garden*, and of course *The Little Foxes*. Skillfully constructed and nailed together with strong scenes, crisp dialogue, and powerful characters, Lillian's theater was fashioned largely under the influence of Ibsen, an unvarnished tribute to contemporary social realism. Like Ibsen, she believed the drama to have a function beyond mere entertainment—that it could be a vehicle for social commentary, psychological insight, and, above all, sharp incisions into the diseased body of a corrupted society. Later in her playwriting career, Lillian made a conscientious effort to loosen up her style—hitherto as carefully arranged as her impeccable coiffure—by employing the more indirect, apparently plotless techniques of Chekhov. But she never wavered in her conviction that theater could be a force for change in what she considered an unethical, unjust, essentially venal world.

Lillian's major theatrical subject was money, how it is made, how it changes lives, what people will do to acquire it. Money, in fact, is usually an additional shadow character in her plays, often the most important one. It can function symbolically, but it also has a tangible, concrete, almost organic nature—in *Toys in the Attic*, money is stroked as if it were a domestic animal. Lillian sometimes seemed to divide the world according to how people's loyalties and values were affected by money (though she loved money herself and usually maintained a sneaking admiration for her villains); this led critics to accuse

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her of being a melodramatist. It is true that her plays, in the tradition of melodrama, often seem to be confrontations between good and evil, paralleling the passionate friendships and bitter enmities of her life. Her capacity for friendship, in fact, was probably the force that originally drew her to the stage, the most collective of all the arts, just as her quarrels and disappointments eventually repelled her from it. Fiercely loyal herself, she could not abide disloyalty in others. And it may be that her life, with its strong alliances, combative courage, and abrupt domestic scenes, will eventually be considered her greatest theater.

She had died on the downside of her reputation, feeling herself under siege in a society where recognition and respect are always being tossed about by the winds of fashion. "Dear Lillian," said John Hersey at her funeral in a hillside cemetery in Chilmark, "you are a finished woman, now." The bitterness was quenched, the physical pain, the mental anguish, over. Her capacity for anger, about which almost everyone spoke, had hurt herself and others at the end, but it had been a more accurate weapon once, at times a fresh and liberating force. "Jonathan Swift has sailed into his rest," wrote W. B. Yeats about another irascible literary figure, "Savage indignation there/Cannot lacerate his breast." One wishes the same peace for Lillian Hellman, but many of us will surely miss that reckless heart, that wild, cantankerous tongue.

"THE NATIONAL COUNCIL of Churches group that went on a Potemkin tour of the Soviet Union was quoted in the Soviet press as praising Soviet freedom of religion, and for once we believe it. If this bunch had dropped in at the Roman Colosseum, it would have had kind words for the lions."

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CHIP OF FOOLS

The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit
by Sherry Turkle

(Simon & Schuster, 362 pp., $17.95)

Turing's Man: Western Culture in the Computer Age
by J. David Bolter

(University of North Carolina Press, 255 pp., $19.95, $8.95 paper)

Before rushing blindly into the computer age, we need to remind ourselves that events have already falsified most of the predictions about "postindustrial society" issued with such authoritative assurance over the last forty years. According to a long line of social forecasters, the expansion of the service sector of the economy, the growing proportion of white-collar workers in relation to blue-collar workers, and the development of increasingly sophisticated technologies will homogenize the class structure of advanced capitalist societies. In the middle-class society of the future, "professional, technical, and managerial people," as Peter Drucker argued in 1958, will "become the largest group in the working population, . . . larger in fact than the blue-collar people."

Advanced technology, on this reasoning, will create an insatiable demand for trained personnel. In the 1950s and 1960s, those who predicted a "knowledge revolution" cited the growth of college enrollments after World War II and the upgrading of the educational credentials required for employment. The exponential increase of information, in their view, accounted not only for the decline of the working class and the rise of a "new middle class," but for the poverty of the newly discovered "underclass" of blacks, Puerto Ricans, and other "culturally deprived" minorities who lacked the skills essential to effective competition in the labor market. The drive for equal opportunity in education, in many ways the heart of the liberal program in the '50s and '60s, assumed that once the underclass had been equipped with technical skills, it would gain access to steady jobs and find its way into the mainstream of American life.

Today the same arguments are advanced in favor of compulsory training

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in the use of computers. Yet the "post-industrial society" routinely invoked in such appeals has demonstrably failed to materialize. The prolonged academic depression, the surplus of college graduates, and the growing unemployment even among people with advanced degrees, make a mockery of Drucker's optimistic assertion that "we cannot get enough educated people." It now appears that employers use educational credentials not to certify technical competence but merely to screen out applicants, mostly from the working and lower classes, who lack what has aptly been called a white-collar union card—that is, a college degree. The educational system has not served as an equalizer. For reasons explained by Christopher Jencks and others, it has reinforced class distinctions instead of breaking them down. Nor has the United States become a middle-class society. Thanks to the work of Richard Parker, Andrew Levinson, Paul Blumberg, and Harry Braverman, among others, it is now clear that most white-collar workers perform essentially unskilled labor. Distinctions between white-collar jobs and blue-collar jobs have become increasingly arbitrary and misleading. Advanced industrial society rests not on the upgrading of skills but on the systematic destruction of skills—on the "degradation of labor," in Braverman's phrase.

FAR FROM upgrading the technical skills of the work force, advanced technology in the service of corporate capitalism makes skilled labor superfluous. It promotes an interchangeability of personnel, a rapid movement from one type of work to another, and most important of all, a growing concentration of the labor force in technically backward, labor-intensive, and often un-unionized sectors of the economy. The rapid growth of employment in the service sector, which allegedly proves that America has become a middle-class, "postindustrial" society, reflects, on the contrary, the proletarianization of the work force and the growth of the reserve army of labor, as Marx called it—the casually or irregularly employed workers who constitute an "inexhaustible reservoir of disposable labor-power." The same developments lead to high levels of unemployment, which can no longer be regarded as aberrational but have to be seen, as Braverman puts it, as a "necessary part of the working mechanisms of the capitalist mode of production."

I dwell on all this because apologies for the computer and for intensified computer instruction in the schools rest on the familiar claim that technological innovations will create an abundance of skilled jobs, eliminate disagreeable jobs, and make life easy for everyone. Everything we know about technological "progress" indicates, on the contrary, that it promotes inequality and political centralization. It commends itself to the masters of American industry for that very reason. Whenever we hear that some new technology is "inevitable" we should consult the historical record, which shows that technical innovations usually appeal to industrialists not because they are inevitable or even because they make for greater productive efficiency, but because they consolidate the industrialist's power over the work force. The triumph of industrial technology testifies not to the inexorable march of science, but to the defeat of working-class resistance.

It is a muddled, ahistorical view of the industrial revolution that dismisses this resistance as an attempt to "postpone the inevitable," as J. David Bolter writes in his study of the coming "computer age." It is equally muddled to argue that since the "computer age" is upon us, our best hope lies in "reforming the age of computers from within." In the past, efforts to reform industrial technology from within, usually led by engineers, served merely to reinforce the lessons already driven home by workers' resistance to the introduction of new technologies: that those technologies serve the interests of capital and that even those who design and manage the machines have little to say about the uses they are put to.

Over and over again, new technologies have reduced even the engineer's work to a routine. What originates as a craft degenerates into a series of automatic operations performed more or less unthinkingly. Computer programming is no exception to this pattern. As Sherry Turkle writes:

> In the course of the last decades programmers have watched their opportunities to exercise their expertise in a spontaneous way being taken away. Those who are old enough remember the time when things were different as a kind of golden age, an age when a programmer was a skilled artisan who was given a problem and asked to conceive of and craft a solution. . . . Today, programs are written on a kind of assembly line. The professional programmer works as part of a large team and is in touch with only a small part of the problem being worked on.

IN THE early days of the computer, according to Turkle, many people hoped that electronic technology could be captured by the counterculture. "Personal computers became symbols of hope for a new populism in which citizens would band together to run information resources and local government." But things did not turn out that way. Computers encouraged centralization and bureaucracy. Instead of humanizing industry, the personal computer came to serve as an escape from industry for hobbyists and even for professional programmers seeking to achieve in the privacy of the home the control they could no longer exercise at work. Turkle reminds us that "people will not change unresponsive government or intellectually deadening work through involvement with their machines at home." But personal computers offer the illusion of control in "one small domain," if not in the larger world of work and politics. Sold to the public as a means of access to the new world of postindustrial technology, personal computers in fact provide escape from that world. They satisfy a need for mastery and control denied outlets elsewhere.

They provide other forms of escape as well. In interviews with people who use computers extensively, particularly with children, Turkle found that computers appeal to people who find their personal lives unmanageable, often to people afraid of being overwhelmed by uncontrollable emotions. "The greater the anxiety about being out of control, the greater the seduction of the material that offers the promise of perfect response." Playing video games and solving problems on a home computer help to dissociate thought from feeling. They encourage a cool, detached, cerebral state of mind. They allow the operator to feel at once "swept away and in control." The computer provides a lifelike response that can nevertheless be predicted and controlled. It is no wonder that many users find themselves becoming addicted to their computers. After contrasting early expectations about computer technology to the role it actually plays in people's lives, Turkle concludes: "It would certainly be inap-

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propriate to rejoice at the 'holistic' relationships that personal computers offer if it turns out that they serve as a kind of opiate."

EXERTION of control over a machine often leads to the further step of identification with the machine—to a new conception of the self as a machine in its own right. Turkle's principal contention is that technologies are "evocative," changing the way we think about ourselves and about human nature. The image evoked by computers is the image of the machine-like self. In this sense, it is a "mirror of the mind"—not because it accurately imitates the operation of the mind (as we are often told) but because it satisfies the wish to believe that thought can divorce itself from emotion. For those who have entered most fully into the world of the computer, the prospect that men and women can become machines is a hopeful promise, not a threat. The promise finds its most highly developed expression in the utopia of "artificial intelligence"—the "next step in evolution," as Edward Fredkin of M.I.T. once proclaimed it. The theory of artificial intelligence rests on the premise that "thought does not need a unitary agent who thinks," as Turkle puts it. Thought can dispense with the thinking self, in other words. It can thus overcome the emotional and bodily limitations that have encumbered humanity in the past. Theorists of artificial intelligence celebrate the mind's clarity, as opposed to what one of them, Marvin Minsky, revealingly refers to as the "bloody mess of organic matter."

These dreamers hope to create a new race of supermen freed from nature and from man's oldest enemy, death. Listen to Fredkin's contemptuous recital of human limitations.

> Basically, the human mind is not most like a god or most like a computer. It's most like the mind of a chimpanzee and most of what's there isn't designed for living in high society [sic] but for getting along in the jungle or out in the fields. . . . The mere idea that we have to be the best in the universe is kind of far-fetched. . . . The fact is, I think we'll be enormously happier once our niche has limits to it. We won't have to worry about carrying the burden of the universe on our shoulders as we do today. We can enjoy life as human beings without worrying about it.

The social vision implied by this kind of thinking is as regressive as the escapist psychology behind it. The psychology is the fantasy of total control, absolute transcendence of the limits imposed on mankind by its lowly origins. As for the social vision, it carries one step further the logic of industrialism, in which the centralization of decision-making in an educated elite frees the rest of us from the burden of political participation.

According to J. David Bolter, the computer promotes a new understanding of human limitations; and Fredkin's statement might lend itself to just this sort of misinterpretation. Like Turkle, Bolter studies the computer's imaginative impact. He too concludes that computers evoke a new image of man as a machine. But he offers a more encouraging reading of this "major change in sensibilities," one reminiscent of those advanced by Marshall McLuhan and Alvin Toffler. The computer has undermined our "linear" conception of progress, Bolter thinks, and replaced it with a "finite world view." It has weakened the old Faustian "concern with depth" and encouraged a concern with surfaces. It has devalued emotional intensity; but "if the computer age does not produce a Michelangelo and a Goethe, it is perhaps less likely to produce a Hitler or even a Napoleon."

Bolter is not unaware of the computer's "utopian" appeal; but he thinks that other considerations "balance" the Faustian implications of computer technology. "We are becoming aware of our own temporal limitations." But as Fredkin's feverish reflections show so clearly, this acknowledgment of limitations, prompted by a comparison of the slow-moving human mind with the computer's rapid calculations, does not mean what it appears to mean. Instead of accepting human limitations, theorists of artificial intelligence and other prophets of the new electronic age dream of overcoming them by creating a new race of machines, just as genetic engineers dream of redesigning the human body so as to free it from all the ills that flesh is heir to.

Like most people who write about computers, Bolter—a classicist with a master's degree in computer science—has no interest in politics and no conception of the political context of computer technology. His claim that computers foster a sense of limits rests, in part, on the irrelevant observation that "computers figure largely in all facets of conservation and rational consump-

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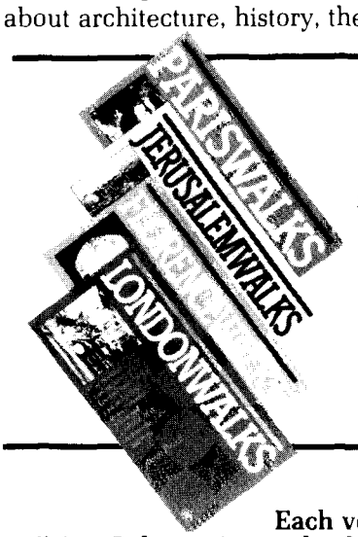

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tion." Conservation and consumption are political issues, not technical issues, and computers in themselves will do nothing to bring about a rational allocation of scarce resources or a less exploitive attitude toward nature. Conservation runs counter to our entire system of large-scale capitalist enterprise. It demands small-scale production, political decentralization, and an abandonment of our consumer culture. It demands a change in the way we live, not a new technology, even a "revolutionary" technology. In any case, the revolutionary impact of information technology has been greatly exaggerated by students of "megatrends." Like all technologies, the computer solves problems that are defined not by technology itself but by the prevailing social priorities. In a society based on the ruthless exploitation of natural resources and on the dream that man can "raise himself above the status that nature seems to have assigned him," in Bolter's own words, the computer will serve as another weapon in man's war against nature. More prosaically, it will serve as a means of producing corporate profits. In a more democratic society, the computer might serve more constructive purposes.

Technology is a mirror of society, as Turkle insists, not a revolutionary force in its own right. It shows us ourselves as we are and as we would like to be; and what it reveals, in the case of the computer, is an unflattering image of the American at his most incorrigibly escapist, hoping to lose himself—in every sense of the term—in the cool precision of machines that know everything except everything pertaining to that "bloody mess of organic matter."

CHRISTOPHER LASCH

Christopher Lasch is the author of *The Minimal Self: Psychic Survival in Troubled Times*, to be published by Norton in October.

100% COTTON

The Life and Times of Cotton Mather by Kenneth Silverman

(Harper & Row, 479 pp., $29.95)

The study of history is a leap of faith from the present to the past. Students of history are something like acrobats, set on a precarious perch overlooking two disjoined (but never unrelated) worlds. The task of understanding—the trick of it—is to negotiate the intervening distance without losing sight of either side. For American history this task is nowhere more difficult than in the study of our beginnings—hundreds of years removed from us in time, and eons removed in values, in attitudes, in habits of life.

"Puritanism," in particular, has goaded and challenged historians beyond number, and often has frustrated their best efforts. Thus one vein of Puritan studies, prominent in the early decades of this century, produced the pasteboard caricatures of (still) popular lore: Puritans-as-bogeymen, grim, intolerant, credulous, more than a little paranoid. In due course, a reaction set in. Led by the late, great Perry Miller, a new generation of historians threw down the old for being far too dismissive and present-minded. Focusing above all on the devotional and intellectual life of the Puritans, this group fashioned one of the great triumphs of modern scholarship. The essence of the triumph was full, accurate, and altogether sensitive representation; its method was *explication de texte*. But it carried a cost as well. To approach the Puritans in this way was to take them entirely on their own terms. Indeed, the work of some recent Miller disciples virtually reads like Puritan sermon literature, so close is the scholar-to-subject identification. Thus rendered, Puritanism remains inaccessible to all but a small coterie of initiates—and even for them is a parade of exotics. In effect, the balance has shifted from one extreme to the other, from an excess of presentism to (what might be called) an unmodified "pastism."

Some such historiographic overview is needed in order to take the measure of a superb new entry in Puritan studies, Kenneth Silverman's biography of the Boston minister Cotton Mather. The Mather we have heretofore known furnishes an especially striking instance of the above-mentioned tendencies: crudest of the pasteboards, strangest of the exotics. In Silverman's hands, however, he is neither. Instead he is a figure of depth, complexity, and surpassing interest—someone who still surprises and confounds us, even as we recognize his all-too-human strengths and weaknesses.

MANY FACTS of Cotton Mather's life have long been known, and Silverman does not pretend to add to them. But he sorts them, connects them, and ultimately interprets them in ways both novel and compelling. The fifteen chapters and 400-plus pages of his book amount to an elegantly "braided narrative" (in David Hackett Fischer's fine phrase), comprising several major thematic strands joined along a broad chronological line.

The chronology itself is intriguing. Born in 1663, as the first son of an already prominent clergyman (and grandson of two more), Cotton Mather was precocious in religion and in much else as well. As a young child he was reading Scripture daily, transcribing long sermons given by his father (Increase Mather) and others, and composing prayers for "my Play-mates." By the age of 10 he knew Latin and Greek and had begun Hebrew grammar. At 11½ he became the youngest student ever admitted to Harvard College. Graduating at 15, he was soon preaching public sermons and assisting his father in the ministry of the Old North Church. He was ordained in 1685 (age 22), and married a year later. In 1689 he set another record for precocity, by becoming at 26 the youngest minister ever invited to preach an "election sermon" before the Massachusetts General Court. This highly honorific assignment presaged a close and nearly continuous involvement in the public life of the colony, from the infamous witchcraft trials of 1692 through the devastating smallpox epidemic of 1721. Meanwhile his family life was developing its own pace and permutations. His first

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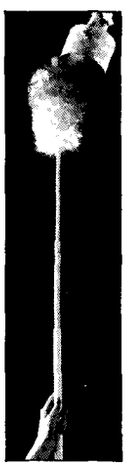

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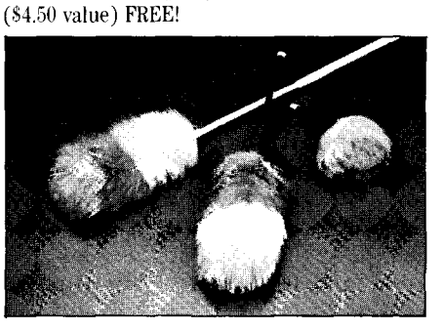

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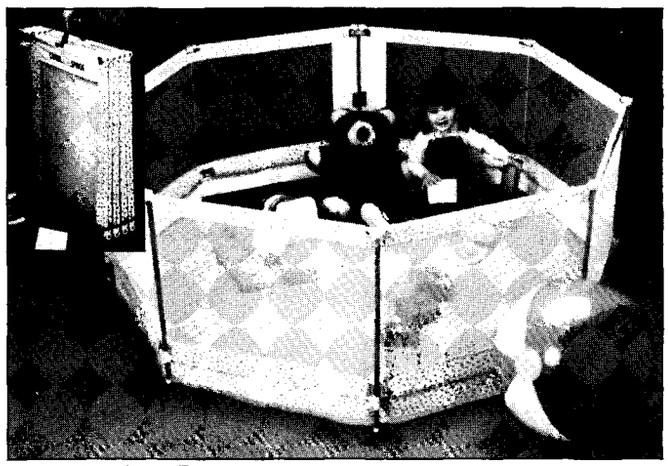

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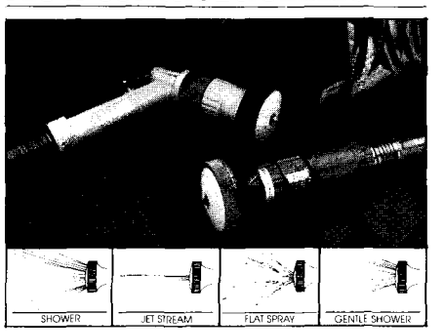

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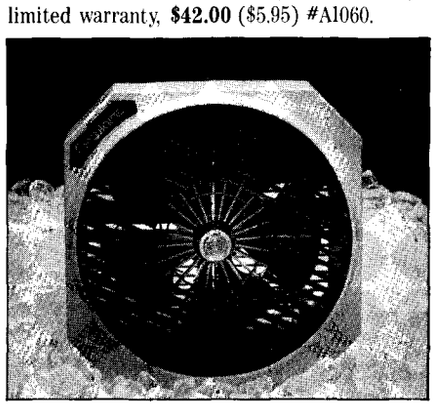

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wife died in 1702. He took another the following year; she too left him a widower, a decade later. He married for the third and last time in 1716. From his first two marriages sprang a total of fifteen children, all but two of whom Mather outlived. His own death came in 1728, a day after he had turned 65.

To follow this time-line aright one must attempt to disentangle the various strands of Mather's life and activity. First, and evidently foremost, was the vocational strand: Mather the minister. Together with his father he presided over a congregation numbering as many as fifteen hundred souls, probably the largest in all New England. In this connection he prepared and delivered roughly seventy lengthy sermons each year. He also kept extensive church records; performed countless baptisms, marriages, and funerals; promoted private religious societies (up to twenty at a time); sat on church councils; and carried out an unending round of pastoral visits. In much of this Mather seems to have been highly successful; Silverman notes that "many people loved and honored him for his ministry."

There was also Mather the politician. He could not himself hold governmental office, but he sought repeatedly to influence the minds and the actions of those who did. As the confidant of several royal governors (and the determined opponent of others) he advanced opinions on appointments, on law, and on all manner of policy; and he cultivated a broad range of political contacts in both Old and New England. Once at least—during the revolutionary turmoil of 1689—he took a direct part in civil leadership, delivering speeches from the gallery of the Boston town hall, and "writing orders" inside.

There was Mather the scientist. Medicine, for example, was one of his keenest interests from his college years onward; and his advocacy of the "innovation" of smallpox inoculation, in the face of severe public resistance, makes perhaps the single most courageous chapter in his life. Meanwhile, as a correspondent—later as a Fellow—of the Royal Society in London, he followed new scientific developments of all kinds. And he sought to contribute, too, by publishing in the Society's *Transactions* a series of letters on "all New and Rare Occurrences of Nature, in these parts of the World." (These so-called "Curiosa Americana," notes Silverman, expressed "an embryonic element of nationalism.")

His considerable careers in the ministry, in public life, and in science depended, in turn, on the efforts of Mather the author. Though the quality of his writing may be open to debate, its quantity is not. Three hundred and eighty-eight published titles, plus much additional work that never saw the light of print, plus thousands of pages of personal correspondence, diaries, sermon notes, and the like: these are the staggering dimensions of the Mather corpus. For better or worse it made him, according to Silverman, perhaps "the best known man in America."

COTTON MATHER, ENGRAVING BY PETER PELHAM (AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY, WORCESTER, MASS.)

Did such prodigious labors exempt Mather from the claims of personal and family life? On the contrary: as son, as husband, as father, he was nothing if not involved. Silverman sketches the particulars in one deft vignette after another. Here is a youthful Mather—newly wed, delighting in his "extremely desireable Companion," yet troubled by the sexual license of marriage and praying for deliverance from the "Slavery" of a "Lust seeming to assault me with a commission." And here is a middle-aged Mather, sitting hour after hour with his mortally ill daughter, comforting her and trying to "Strengthen her in her Agonies." And here he is, at virtually any age throughout his life, performing endless favors for his own hard-to-please father.

Silverman's discussion of these many public and personal themes is excellent, indeed irreproachable. Yet the center of his concern, and his greatest achievement, lies elsewhere—with Mather the inner man. For this is, above all, a deeply, brilliantly psychological biography. The author seems virtually to have taken up residence inside Mather's head and heart; and the reader is repeatedly invited to see the world as Mather himself would have done—looking out.

There is no satisfactory way to summarize this psychological portrait; but an effort must nonetheless be made. A "vaulting ambition," manifesting itself in "yearnings for bigness and fame," and (in seeming paradox) lifelong "feelings of littleness"; a characteristic attitude of submission, covering (or alternating with) "suppressed rage"; a "sense of capability always needing to be authenticated by the approval of . . . others," and a corresponding sensitivity to criticism: thus some of the leading elements in Silverman's Mather. Their derivation from his early relationship to his father is patent; and since Increase lived nearly as long as Cotton himself (and since the two remained pastoral colleagues for 40 years) the entire pattern was continually reinforced.

These traits do not wear a positive aspect, and Mather himself lived uncomfortably with them. His inner conflicts left him prey to recurrent bouts of anxiety (sometimes of "near shattering" proportions), and issued in at least one certifiable symptom. From earliest childhood Cotton Mather was afflicted with stuttering—a considerable handicap for an aspiring minister, and one which in any case caused him great psychic "pain."

Yet always he struggled against his difficulties, and even, in some ways, converted them into gains. The "uncommon Impediment in his Speech" underlay his fascination with language; it was no accident that "the youthful stutterer would become one of the most prolific writers in American history." The struggle with contrary impulses and feelings led to his "preoccupation

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with seeming irreconcilables and his view of himself as a peacemaker between warring factions." The problem of managing rage, and the attendant guilt, promoted his interest in "Doing Good" through a host of private philanthropies—with Indians, with the poor, with the sick and disabled. (The latter interest also picked up his acute feelings of hurt over real or imagined slights: "outcast himself . . . he grew more and more to identify with other outcasts.")

Of course, he could not entirely avoid or defeat the consequences of his own character. The Salem witch-hunt, for example, showed him "zigzagging every way," between distaste for the trial procedures, fawning deference to the judges, sympathy for the accused, and credulous longing for contact with the supernatural. His position was, as one contemporary put it, "perfectly ambidexter." In fact a certain two-sidedness marked his words and deeds all through life. He often seemed, and sometimes was, maddeningly devious. To this key tendency Silverman gives the name "Matherese," and he identifies its representative parts as follows: "belligerent courtesy, self-flattering modesty, fretful calm, denigrating compliments, unacceptable offers." Because of it, "many who knew him sensed in his behavior, as modern readers cannot but sense in his writings, something awry, a disturbing discrepancy between act and intent."

FINALLY, then, Cotton Mather seems far more admirable for what he did than likeable for what he was. And Silverman sums up his life accordingly: "disfigured but large." But for scholars, and for readers of history, the second term may well be the more important one. Not only was he large in deeds, large in reputation, and large in influence on contemporaneous events; he was, as well, large in long-term significance. Silverman stresses, in particular, his role as a figure of change. His religious ideas, while rooted in the faith of his Puritan forebears, in many respects looked ahead to "liberal eighteenth-century Protestantism." His interest in Doing Good displayed "the nascent spirit of Benjamin Franklin" and anticipated the reform movements of a much later era. His readiness to embrace urbane fashions (for instance, the wearing of wigs) pointed in a similar direction. In short, the folklore picture of Cotton Mather—as an embittered defender of the Bad Old Days—seems simply, and grievously, wrong.

There is one more thing to add on the score of Mather's significance. He accepted his lot as a citizen of the New, not the Old, World—and sought to make the most of it. Much of what he wrote and did was intended "to support the character of his Country abroad" (as his son and eulogist, Samuel Mather, later put it). In supporting his country's character, he also helped to define it—and defined himself as well. "In his curiousness, epic reach, and quirkily ingenious individualism," concludes Silverman, "he was . . . the first unmistakably American figure in the nation's history.

THE BOOK, no less than its subject, is large in meaning and significance. For what Silverman achieves can well stand as a model for biographers and historians in general. *The Life and Times of Cotton Mather* is the product of a uniquely fruitful encounter between two eras—indeed, between two sentient, committed, altogether lively human beings. One feels, throughout, Silverman's struggle to come to terms with the man behind the documents. Moreover, one feels Silverman's feelings: the excitement of cumulating discoveries, the occasional perplexities, the disappointments, even the outrage, over some of Mather's foibles and failings. These things are never forced on the discussion, but neither are they rigidly excluded. In effect, Silverman *uses* his own reactions to Mather in the service of ever greater understanding.

Psychiatrists have a name for this process (as manifested in their clinical work): "counter transference." And psychiatrists would also have no trouble finding a name—a diagnostic label—for the figure portrayed here: a "narcissistic character," through and through. It is worth noting, therefore, that Silverman entirely avoids such labelling, and hardly alludes to the theory-building which lies behind it. That he knows, and has profitably consulted, the theory seems probable (witness, for example, a few long footnotes on the pyschology of stuttering). But he prefers to hold "technical" interpretation to a very bare minimum, and thus to sustain the immediacy of his encounter with the evidence. What a reader finds, from the first page to the last, is a counterpoint of voices, Mather talking (as it were) to Silverman, and Silverman talking about Mather. Listen.

Mather's most characteristic note is hyperbole. Thus his first child was "perhaps One of the Comeliest Infants that have been seen in the world." His church audiences were typically so big that "it would be beyond the Strength of a mortal Man to preach unto much bigger." His third marriage (which would quickly deteriorate into deep bitterness and periodic separations) seemed at the outset so good that "perhaps the married State never Exhibited an Example of a Greater Harmony." The downside of Mather's experience was also (in his mind) of extraordinary

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proportions. His enemies attacked him with "all the raging Obloquy imaginable." And he sometimes suffered "more cares, fears, anxieties, than, I believe, any one person in these territories." He could be playful (for instance, in describing his young son Sammy as "a very promising little spark"). And vengeful (the president of Harvard as an "infamous drone"). He could be impassioned (as in pleading for public acceptance of smallpox inoculation: "We, that cry with a loud voice to them, *Do yourselves no Harm*, and show them, How to keep themselves from the paths of the Destroyer, are conscious of nothing, but of a pity for Mankind under the Rebukes of God.") And eloquent (as when he averred that secret prayer does "an incredible deal, towards Jogging the High Wheels of Providence, and Shaking of Churches and Empires"). Or merely flowery (for example, this tribute to a clergyman-mentor: "like Mary's opened Box of Ointment, he filled the whole Room with the Perfumes of the Graces in his Lips").

Silverman's voice is softer, but no less remarkable for its expressive qualities. Sometimes it is carefully measured. (On Mather's later life: "what he lost in exclusivism he gained in liberality.") And sometimes incisive. (On Mather's double-edged farewell to a group of departing parishioners: "a bravura kiss of death.") Often it is pungent. ("However beset, . . . he . . . found much of his life savory and devoured it, a voluptuary of time.") Or vividly metaphorical. (His huge masterwork, the *Magnalia Christi Americana*, seems "distinctively showmanlike, as if history were some banquet, and he the master of ceremonies.") Or downright racy. ("He called up his former ambidexter politeness with Dudley, but raised to a key of bitchiness.") Occasionally it is scathing ("his meddlesome ambitiousness that stooped or strutted for petty advancement") and, occasionally, whimsical ("his appetite for believe-it-or-nots"). And always it is elegant, evocative, resonant in the deepest sense. If it were nothing else, *The Life and Times of Cotton Mather* would surely be the most beautifully composed biography of the year.

But it is more, much more. Thanks to Professor Silverman we now can *know* Cotton Mather better than any other single "Puritan." And in knowing Mather, we know more about ourselves.

JOHN DEMOS

John Demos, professor of history at Brandeis University, is the author of *Entertaining Satan: Witchcraft and the Culture of Early New England* (Oxford University Press).

CRITICAL CROCHETS

Required Writing: Miscellaneous Pieces 1955-1982 by Philip Larkin

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 328 pp., $17.95, $9.95 paper)

Philobrit: How delightful is Philip Larkin! I've already sent this book to some friends who fit the description (I couldn't help noticing) of the people Larkin writes for: "Sullen fleshy inarticulate men, stockbrokers, sellers of goods, living in thirty-year-old detached houses among the golf courses of Outer London, husbands of ageing and bitter wives . . . fathers of cold-eyed lascivious daughters on the pill, to whom Ramsay MacDonald is coeval with Rameses II, and cannabis-smoking jeans-and-bearded Stuart-haired sons whose oriental contempt for 'bread' is equalled only by their insatiable demand for it; men in whom a pile of scratched coverless 78s in the attic can awaken memories. . . . " *Nice* people.

Arcturus: Written in 1970 by a man who didn't love the '60s. It reminds me of his poem, "Sexual intercourse began/In nineteen sixty-three/(Which was rather late for me)—Between the end of the *Chatterley* ban/And the Beatles' first L.P." Though it's odd: when I first read those lines, I gave them credit for a self-irony that I don't hear in the quotation you just read.

Philobrit: Irony is a modern habit, greatly overrated and usually a sign of decadence. Larkin himself says so. The things that matter in poetry are straightforward because they are felt.

Arcturus: When people talk about things being straightforward, I always wonder why they read poetry and not traffic signs. But Larkin does apply the principle consistently; and his hatred of modernism goes the whole length: Yeats, Eliot, Joyce, Picasso, Henry Moore—the works. It pretty well clears the field.

Philobrit: No, it leaves plenty of others; a solid contemporary tradition that doesn't happen to be avant-garde. Half the book is made up of appreciations.

Arcturus: Of Kingsley Amis, Barbara Pym, Ian Fleming, John Betjeman, the whole Merrie Eng—

Philobrit: And Hardy; don't forget Hardy.

Arcturus: The trouble is, Larkin's idea of Hardy brings him into line, somehow, with the rest of that company. And by doing so it diminishes him. It makes Hardy into a reliable master who guides our faltering steps, a messenger from the days when everybody still knew what they thought, and poems were written to be read by . . . by *whom*, come to think of it? Simple souls like George Meredith and Leslie Stephen? Housewives, with names like Eustacia, Arabella, and Tess? I'm sorry, but I can't see Hardy as a sort of proto-Betjeman.

Philobrit: Much of Larkin's defense of popular writers you have to take as sport. Though it might get tedious if it ever caught on. I think it's behind his enthusiasm for Fleming, too: "What strikes one most about his books today is their unambiguous archaic decency."

Arcturus: I know just what he means. *Honeychile Rider stood again before Bond with her proudly jutting breasts, each nipple a pointed stigma of desire.* Nor ought we to forget that Fleming gave the English that invaluable word *chigro*. Why, Larkin has a streak of decency as wide as the Severn, as deep as Montego Bay, as—

Philobrit: Sarcasm is so easy for a lefty. Incidentally, Larkin knows all about your kind; he says in an interview: "Not being a political thinker I suppose I identify the Right with certain virtues and the Left with certain

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vices. . . . Thrift, hard work, reverence, desire to preserve—those are the virtues, in case you wondered: and on the other hand idleness, greed and treason." Being a scrupulous man he adds, "All very unfair, no doubt."

Arcturus: No doubt. The Oxford tutor he remembers in another place, who said "Mr. Larkin can understand a point, if it is explained to him," was exaggerating. What he can understand is a prejudice, if it is his own.

Philobrit: Larkin is a totally personal critic—that's what annoys you. He writes well and does all that the experts do, with more interest and less fuss.

Arcturus: Granted he writes a good, clear, unmannered prose. But if by "writes well" you mean "says original things," I deny it utterly. He has a commonplace mind—the mind of a well-seasoned reviewer. He comments on a great variety of authors and has nothing unexpected to say about any of them. On de la Mare he is conventional. On Dickinson he is paralyzed by his antipathy for the subject: he treats her the way nineteenth-century readers did, as a bizarre case of arrested development, with maybe twelve good poems. But the most serious piece in the book is the unhappiest of all: a survey of Andrew Marvell's reputation, in which three centuries of Marvell's critics are canvassed individually, ticked off with a dismissive one-liner for each, and consigned to oblivion along with Marvell himself, who is held to be too modern and ambiguous to survive much longer.

I can't agree, either, that his tone is especially personal. He points out in several essays (after-dinner chats, actually) that he's been a librarian for much of his life; and the librarian side of his nature asserts itself in the sort of sentence that begins: "It is hardly an exaggeration to say that insofar as. . . . " Again, his essay, "Wanted: Good Hardy Critic," is an officiously responsible call to order, in the most orthodox style: it has to name a dozen earlier writers on Hardy to establish the need for a fairer assessment. Just listen to this list: "Lord David Cecil, Edmund Blunden, Lascelles Abercrombie, Webster, Guerard, Hawkins." Now, who on earth are Webster and Hawkins? Does he mean Ben Webster and Coleman Hawkins?

Philobrit: Let's not get into *that*. I don't know anyone who defends Larkin's jazz reviews and I won't be the first. He thinks the Fall occurred somewhere between Louis Armstrong and Fats Waller; everything after he loathes equally.

Arcturus: In turn, I will concede that I enjoyed the essays on Wilfred Owen, Stevie Smith, and Barbara Pym; he writes about all these with an unforced admiration, without using them to score points against someone else. Only I wish the very thought of an author like Pym didn't send him into cooings over "one's small blameless comforts." Nobody's going to take them away from him.

Philobrit: This is becoming very unpleasant. Anyway, I should have thought what I'm saying is obvious. Larkin compares favorably with today's overstimulated critics because he is not self-serving in his approach to literature. He keeps to the subject—*he* is never the story he tells, and he avoids any special pleading.

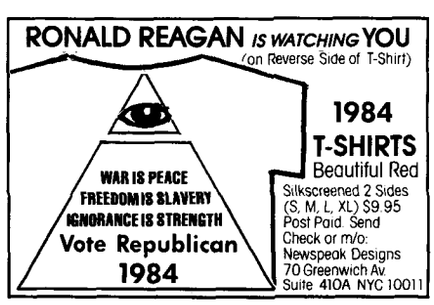
Arcturus: A remarkable feat if he's done it; but I can't see that he has. Take his description of the jazz clarinetist George Lewis: "There were no tremendous finishes, astounding solos, murderous buildups; just this happy, jogging polyphony, a gay-painted musical merry-go-round made up of numerous simple yet sensitive voices, a group of men playing with the complete conviction of performers at the heart of an unquestioned tradition." Well, whom does that remind you of?

Philobrit: All right. It sounds like a description of Larkin. Being set off rather flatteringly against a poet like Yeats, with his tremendous finishes, astounding solos, murderous buildups.

Arcturus: You think Larkin's opinions are separately fine or less fine; whereas I think they add up to a program. One needs a name for it, and I suggest *Amis-with-treacle*. Half of it is a philistine attack on modernism, the other half a sentimental defense of provincialism. The preferred tone for the second is weary and flat; for the first, it shifts back to something provocative and dandyish; but at either end Larkin is deft at making it appear that *his* is the lost cause worth cherishing.

Philobrit: You're jealous. Besides, Larkin's enemies are yours: government-subsidized Dada, doctors of Creative Writing, all the swill of mass suffrage in the arts. Why not admit that he is a warm and sympathetic man, who, almost alone among modern poets, has kept up a concern with the lives of ordinary people?

Arcturus: Because your warm and sympathetic man can say of Sylvia Plath that "like many Americans she had a psychiatrist, but, more individually, had also a scar across her cheek from an earlier suicide attempt." Of course, it's a small matter that Larkin doesn't know the difference between a psychiatrist and a psychologist. But his modesty of information grows cloying after a while. Reviewing Donald Davie's *Sequence for Francis Parkman*, he decides that Parkman, whom he's never heard of, is probably one of Davie's American friends. In another, he associates all the faults of modern jazz with ("so they tell me") a transition from the diatonic to the chromatic scale. As he puts it: "The diatonic scale is what you use if you want to write a national anthem, or a love song, or a lullaby. The chromatic scale is what you use to give the effect of drinking a quinine martini and having an enema simultaneously." Funny. But you can see he wouldn't know a diatonic scale from a dianetic cure. His strictures are exactly on a level with the people who tell you that free verse was the death of poetry. In view of this I count him dull, not clever, when he answers an interviewer who has men-



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tioned the name Jorge Luis Borges, "Who's Jorge Luis Borges?"

Philobrit: Nothing wrong with a polemical critic setting himself above the battle.

Arcturus: But he ought to be more honest in his tactics. Larkin constantly implies that those who do find something to admire in "the aberration of modernism that blighted all the arts" are somehow less sincere than he. As if they were faking it when they said they liked those complex, ambiguous, chromatic products from abroad. As if Empson praising "The Garden" were more self-conscious than Larkin praising *Live and Let Die*. Often, too, he uses a sliding scale of values to arrive at the conclusion he wants. The poems Auden wrote in America, for example, are dismissed on the grounds that "their poetic pressure is not high" and that "Auden, never a pompous poet, has now become an unserious one." Everywhere else, high pressure and seriousness figure among the vices Larkin most deplores in modern writing. But now comes Auden before the bar, and is condemned for being a frivolous low-pressure type.

Philobrit: It seems to me that your objections prove too much. If Larkin were as limited a sensibility as you make out, he could hardly have written his poems.

Arcturus: He could very well have. His poems always return to an unhappiness contracted in early manhood, for which words themselves are a helpless remedy. But Larkin thinks of poetry as a gesture that links him with other people and their losses: it has the repeatability of a shared consolation. In this he resembles not Hardy, but Housman. He is a perfect student of one nostalgia.

Take a memorable poet of this kind, narrow his creed to a satisfied insularity, convert his preferences into a class of feelings that excludes every other class, and you have something like Larkin the critic. What I get too little of from his essays is the sense of having been "out on the end of an event/Waving goodbye/To something that survived it."

Philobrit: And too much of—?

Arcturus: "Give me your arm, old toad;/Help me down Cemetery Road."

DAVID BROMWICH

David Bromwich writes on poetry for *Raritan* and is author of *Hazlitt: The Mind of a Critic* (Oxford University Press).

THE JOY OF SECTS

The Neoliberals: Creating the New American Politics by Randall Rothenberg

(Simon & Schuster, 287 pp., $16.95)

This is the first book on neoliberalism as a new political tendency within the Democratic Party. It is well timed; the unexpected successes of Gary Hart in the Presidential primaries have given sudden prominence to many of the social and economic diagnoses and remedies that Rothenberg summarizes. Though presumably written before Hart had emerged as Mondale's major competitor for the nomination, Hart is mentioned more frequently than any other politician, which inevitably gives the book something of the flavor of a campaign biography, if a retrospective one.

Although its aim is not to sing the virtues of an individual candidate but to extol a set of policies that have allegedly cohered into a new outlook that sharply repudiates the past tenets of liberalism, Rothenberg's effort is no less superficial than most campaign biographies. Anyone curious about when, where, and by whom the neoliberal label was first coined and circulated; about which politicians, journalists, and academic analysts have embraced or become associated with the label; and, more importantly, about what specific proposals they have advanced, will find this book a handy reference. The author has interviewed an enormous number of people and read a lot of magazine articles, as well as a few recent books. He reports their contents under such broadly defined areas of government policy as military reform, the stimulation of new investment, tax revision, educational reform, and industrial policy. Some of this reads like an attempt to answer the silly "Where's the beef?" question leveled at Hart last April, although Hart rather backed off during the campaign from his neoliberal identification.

ROTHENBERG surrounds the mass of information he has assembled with bursts of such stupefyingly shallow sloganizing as to prompt doubt and disbelief even in those who previously felt some sympathy for neoliberalism but who know hype when they see it. Neoliberals, we learn, are for technology—the "higher" the better—but against technocracy; for a "holistic" view of the economy, but against systems analysis; for the national interest, but against treating it as the sum of special interests; for competition, but against confrontation; for decentralization and against big bureaucratic government; for entrepreneurial small business and against big bureaucratic corporate business; for industrial policy and against centralized planning; for free trade and against protectionism; for Schumpeter and against Keynes; and so on.

Some of this amounts to little more than word magic, claiming for neoliberalism everything that is good and opposition to everything that is bad. I almost included "for employment and against unemployment" on the above list, though Rothenberg actually says very little about unemployment, except that technologically displaced workers ought to be retrained. Some of Rothenberg's claims are hyperbolic simplifications; and some of them, particularly the novelty and distinctiveness he imputes to neoliberalism, and the negative stereotyping of what is supposedly its opposite, are eminently questionable.

Neoliberals, we are told, see small business as the salvation of the American economy. One blinks. Hasn't small business for several generations been anti-liberal, providing right-wing Republicans with their most stable source of popular support? But Rothenberg isn't thinking of mom-and-pop stores, or of family farms—he means small, capital-intensive, high-tech enterprises run by young professionals with advanced technical educations at the best schools, although he persists in invoking "small business" as a cherished and

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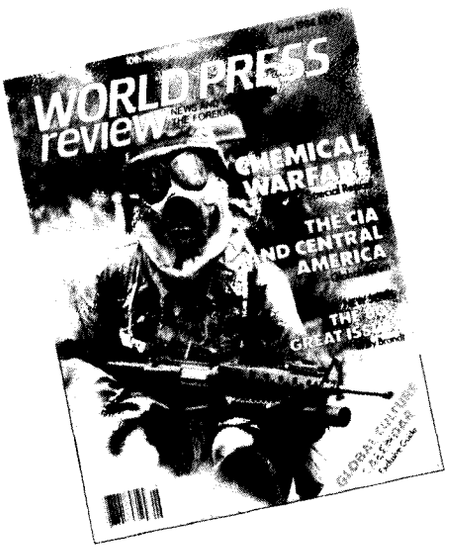

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perennial symbol of American opportunity. Schumpeter is proclaimed as the neoliberals' "favorite economist" in place of Keynes, apparently because Schumpeter eulogized the nineteenth-century entrepreneur as the hero of capitalist economic progress. But that was the nineteenth century; in the middle of the twentieth, Schumpeter dissented from his neoclassical colleagues in his ironic celebration of the giant corporation—ironic because he thought its very success undermined the original ethos of capitalism and inadvertently promoted state collectivism. In his acceptance of the inevitability of big business, he was a predecessor of John Kenneth Galbraith, whom Rothenberg frequently uses as a negative touchstone for the contrasting views of his neoliberal vanguard. Schumpeter was certainly no neoliberal.

Neoliberals are all for economic growth, rejecting the past dalliance of some liberals (such as Jerry Brown) with zero-growth environmentalism. Rothenberg writes as if opposition to growth as such had long been mainstream Democratic Party policy. That will certainly come as news to the trade unions—still, Rothenberg concedes, the party's "largest and most powerful constituency." Next to growth, decentralization is held to be the most fundamental neoliberal principle, in conflict with the statist and centralizing bias of the New Deal heritage. Rothenberg links decentralization to greater reliance on the market and entrepreneurship instead of federal regulation; but the French socialists, who have actually done something to promote it, and the communitarian survivors of the early New Left, are also ardent partisans of decentralization and enemies of big bureaucracies that run things out of capital cities. (Rothenberg also claims a "communitarian" outlook for his neoliberals.) Small business, then, is good, but "small is beautiful" is bad, because it restricts growth; decentralization and microeconomics are good, but neoliberal Congressman Richard Gephardt was right when he "maintained that 'eighty percent of what needs to be done to keep the economy in order comes under the heading of macroeconomic policy,' which is inherently a federal responsibility." One could make some sense and order out of all this backing and filling, but Rothenberg scarcely seems aware of the necessity for doing so. "Neoliberals are not intellectuals or theorists," he announces. Well, he certainly isn't.

One is almost persuaded that neoliberalism is nothing but an ephemeral and synthetic public relations ploy dreamed up by a few aspiring young politicians and their backers in an effort to exploit the national mood of the moment. Dismissive critics on both the right and the left have claimed just this, and they will find support in Rothenberg's book. Conservatives, including neoconservatives, have argued that neoliberalism, notably in its advocacy of "industrial policy," is simply the latest guise for the statist or creeping socialist nostrum of economic planning. Rather more plausibly, writers on the left have depicted neoliberalism as a chameleon-like adaptation to the conservative tide believed to have elected Ronald Reagan, taking the form of praise for the free market and bad-mouthing the alleged excesses of the welfare state. Rothenberg provides a bit more ammunition for this latter view, although he invariably tacks on a few qualifications when he senses that he is beginning to sound too much like publicists for the Reagan Administration or old-line Republican ideology.

NEOLIBERALISM deserves better. Even the label itself, too obviously coined by Charles Peters as a counterpart to the over-publicized neoconservatives, was a legitimate effort to call attention to the fact that there were liberals and Democrats who were responsive to new national problems that differed from those of the '60s and early '70s. Some of them certainly overdid the free market, anti-government line, especially in the early years of the Reagan Administration, before it became evident that the President's personal popularity did not necessarily extend to his policies and ideology. The Representatives, Senators, and state governors identified with neoliberalism are nearly all young, well-educated, and recently elected in two-party states with little heavy industry. What could be more natural than that they should address themselves to the crisis of the economy: wrenching technological changes, a new international division of labor that threatens to deindustrialize America, consequent trade imbalances and structural unemployment, the threat of oil shortages and the need for new energy sources, corporate strategies that aggravate rather than alleviate these conditions? These problems were barely visible until a few years ago. Their appearance on the political agenda is something new, displacing the extension of the welfare state that was the Johnson Administra-

To The Colonised Body

This clumsy soul, how it swerves and spills
coffee on the white rug, wine
on the light wool its writhing body wears,
and fills with new stinks the gleaming fur
and smooth muscle straining in the chair.
And the body! made with such finesse
that the soul envies the articulation
of her little finger, her precise chemical tricks,
as it thunders in its crude domination.

—Oh, my dear thing, how you want
to snap the little spark, the light switch
and make a dark room, no room, no fire, and release,
decay into your maker and be free
from the soul's voice hammering about itself,
its personal voice, "This is *my* body."
And you strapped down, unable, unable,
with the blue windows shattered in your pleated face.

Barry Goldensohn

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tion's primary order of business.

In truth, neoliberalism represents neither a conversion to a bold new political outlook nor a craven abandonment of hallowed liberal principles in the face of triumphant Reaganism. The world has changed, not necessarily for the better, and brought with it an inevitable "reordering of priorities," as we used to say. We are talking, after all, about active reformers and politicians on the firing line, not about political philosophers. Nobody doubts that if the "traditional liberal" Walter Mondale were to be elected President, he would appoint such certified neoliberals as Robert B. Reich and Lester Thurow to positions in his Administration. Neoliberalism, whether one finds the label appropriate or not, is a response to the new structural problems of the economy. The notion that it constitutes a decisive and dramatic break with the liberalism of the past is a piece of dubious slogan-mongering. For all the talk about getting rid of the incubus of the New Deal, Rothenberg himself notes that several major neoliberal proposals are patterned after the early New Deal, when greatest urgency was understandably assigned to measures aimed at overcoming the stagnation of the economy.

ROTHENBERG'S book is about policy but scarcely at all about politics. Indeed, he finds the very idea of different political constituencies distasteful, smacking of "special interests," and deprecates the demands of organized labor, blacks, Jews (on "Mideast policy"), and feminists. One of the few articles by neoliberals that he fails to cite is one by Robert B. Reich and Ira Magaziner which appeared in this journal. It pointed out that the much-vaunted Japanese model of industrial cooperation was possible because of Japan's limited tutelary democracy, which gave the victims of technological progress little opportunity to defend themselves politically. Rothenberg concludes that "the Democratic Party has been held hostage by its fifty-year-old coalition," and he observes plaintively: "Contrast the Republican Party: one never hears of the 'Republican coalition.' " I am moved to paraphrase Fats Waller and suggest that someone who can write this way about American politics just ain't never going to understand it. Yet once again Rothenberg undercuts his own argument in contending that "if one thing rings false in all the rhetoric of neoliberalism, it is that the 'national interest' may be nothing more than the special interests of the liberal upper middle class." I doubt that even the most ferocious plebeian yuppie-hater would make so damning a charge.

It is the Hart phenomenon that makes neoliberalism (and, regrettably, this mediocre book) a subject of genuine interest. I am not referring to the political fortunes of the Colorado Senator, but to the fact that his surprising primary showing revealed the existence among the so-called yuppies of an unmistakable new constituency with a distinctive political profile of its own. Their indifference to the "conservative" or "moderate" Democrat John Glenn, expected to be Mondale's only formidable opponent, suggests that more is involved than movement toward a conventional (ultimately Republican) identification with the business world by a cohort of affluent college graduates who experienced the ferment of the '60s. The withering under Reagan of any moderate influence in the Republican Party is also a factor. Hart's support casts a backward flare on the improbable nominations of George McGovern in 1972 and Jimmy Carter in 1976, as well as on the 13 percent of the popular vote won by John Anderson in the 1980 general election. The New Deal coalition has taken a long time dying; indeed, it is far from dead yet. Still, its majority-building potential is now permanently in doubt even within the Democratic Party, let alone in the electorate at large. Neoliberalism may not be its heir as a well-marked and differentiated programmatic alternative; but it is unlikely, whatever Mondale's fate in 1984, that we shall see another Democratic Presidential candidate identifying himself or herself so closely and totally with the old coalition's component groups and familiar ideological themes.

DENNIS WRONG

Dennis Wrong, professor of sociology at New York University, is the author of *Power: Its Forms, Bases & Uses* (Harper & Row).

NO EXIT

Concrete
by Thomas Bernhard
translated by David McLintock

(Knopf, 156 pp., $12.95)

Among Nietzsche's posthumously published notes we find the following:

> Let us consider this idea in its most terrifying form: existence as it is, without meaning or goal, but inescapably recurrent, without a finale into nothingness. . . . Those who cannot bear the sentence, There is no salvation, *ought* to perish.

Serving up that "existence as it is" has long been one of the main activities of modernist literature, especially in Europe, but the sternly enjoined "ought" has proven thorny even to the most fire-hardened pessimists. The organism manifests a striking sort of obstinacy when its own cessation is at issue. What our masters show us, by and large, is man in a state of deadlock, unable to bear the sentence and unwilling to perish. Beckett's "I can't go on, I'll go on," more or less sums it up.

But the Austrian novelist Thomas Bernhard (born in 1931) has made it his special program to restore to Nietzche's proposition its cutting edge. Putting to one side the matter of eternal recurrence, he asks: Is an existence without meaning or goal—he does not doubt that this is its true character—bearable or not? If it is, then what is the toll exacted from the psyche? If it is not. . . . From the first, Bernhard's novels, *Gargoyles* (1970), *The Lime Works* (1973), *Correction* (1979), and now, *Concrete*, have explored the options with an unflinching gaze. Konrad in *The Lime Works* endures his hellish life—poverty, paralysis of creative will, a crippled,

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importuning wife—for as long as he can. When he reaches the end of his tether, when his reserves are gone, he shoots the woman in the head and lapses into catatonia. In *Correction*, Roithamer, the philosopher, struggles to achieve the perfect integration of his life and his thought; at last he concludes that he has done everything that he can, and must, do, and hangs himself in a clearing in the forest. Possibilities of redemption or reclamation are nowhere suggested.

Concrete is very much of a piece with the earlier works. The same thematic elements are present, though in different groupings, and the investigation of the psyche's response to the "impossible" nature of existence proceeds apace. Even the narrator, Rudolph, is instantly recognizable. Obsessed, depressed, loathing himself and others, he is but the latest carrier of Bernhard's acetylene torch. And he takes it from his predecessor with a vertiginous rush:

> From March to December, writes Rudolph, while I was having to take large quantities of prednisolone, a fact which I'm bound to record here, against the third acute onset of my sarcoidosis, I assembled every possible book and article written by or about Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and visited every possible and impossible library in order to acquaint myself thoroughly with my favorite composer and his work, preparing myself with the most passionate seriousness for the task, which I had been dreading throughout the preceding winter, of writing—such was my pretension—a major work of impeccable scholarship.

"Every possible book," "acquaint myself thoroughly," "preparing myself with the most passionate seriousness. . . . " The most elementary schooling in Freud will give us the typology: Rudolph is repressed, narcissistic, obsessive-compulsive. We are hardly surprised when we learn in the following pages that he is incapable of putting pen to paper to begin his masterwork. To call him "blocked," however, would be to attach a simplifying epithet to what is, in fact, a total paralysis of soul. Rudolph is not obstructed by some malfunctions in part of his being—his being itself is a knot. And as Bernhard's narrative proceeds, we begin to register the dimensions of his crisis, its self-consuming circularity.

RUDOLPH is a master at displacing and shifting blame; he is unable to stare his demon in the face. He cannot begin his treatise, he insists, because he lives in dread of his older sister. She preys on his weakness. He has only to decide to begin and she will promptly appear on his doorstep. Her unannounced visits—the very possibility of them—assault his nerves and destroy his composure. And what a sister! Projected through the enlarging mechanism of his neurosis, she is like some horrible two-dimensional cutout—loud, domineering, crass, the very incarnation of bourgeois philistinism. Against such a visitant all of Rudolph's delicacy and refinement must shrink away.

As readers, though, we have an advantage of objectivity. True, she is an irritating, self-important creature; but she is not nearly the harpy that her brother makes her out to be. The contrast between images underlines for us the severity of the malaise. Her negative attributes—which Rudolph conflates with those of his culture—loom larger as his condition worsens:

> My sister spreads it around Vienna that I am a failure, especially in those quarters where the effect is most devastating for me. I'm continually hearing her say to all and sundry *My little brother and his Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*. She's not embarrassed to call me a madman in everybody's hearing. . . . I know she talks like this about me and gets me an exceedingly damaging reputation everywhere. She recoils from nothing in order to get money, that is to do business, and rather than ruin a party she'd call me anything.

But to all of this he nonetheless adds: "On the other hand I've always loved her, with all her dreadful faults—loved her and hated her."

LACERATING relationships supply much of the central tension in Bernhard's work. Invariably his withdrawn, compulsive males are pitted against small-minded, intractable women. Not in a sexual way, though—the men are too disembodied for that—the opposition is, if this is possible, even more primary. Everything in the female psyche exists for the sole purpose of affronting the man. And this state of affairs is as necessary as it is intolerable. Konrad serves and placates his wife even as he reviles her; Roithamer continues to visit his crude, shrewish mother long after it is clear to him that nothing but pain could ever result from their contact. These characters are so far removed from the daily human commerce that they can only feel their reality in the presence of an adversary. As to why it should always be a woman—a mother, wife, sister—Bernhard gives no clue. Nothing in the work suggests the origin or etiology of this primal face-off. It is simply presented as the state of things. As readers, we feel at times unwelcome, as if we have arrived by mistake at the site of some incomprehensible private exorcism.

Meanwhile, Rudolph, riding the swell of his vituperations, realizes that he cannot endure another winter in his village of Peiskam. And his sister urges him on: "If you don't get away soon, you'll go to pieces and die." He tantalizes himself with images of the island of Palma. There, away from everything, free of his sister and his life-sapping culture, he will work. Nothing will prevent him. Making a decision, though, and following it through, are two very

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different things for Rudolph. His character makes it all but impossible to act. Time and again he gets himself to the brink, has his papers and medicines all packed and ready, only to back down. His health cannot sustain the journey, he will die in a strange hotel, he will not be able to work without his books and materials . . . Bernhard is aware of the possibilities for humor in Rudolph's indecisiveness:

> I was caught up once more in my own personal comedy. I'd changed course, and once again it was simply a laughing matter or a crying matter, depending on how I felt, but since I wanted neither to laugh nor to cry, I got up and checked whether I had packed the right medicaments. I had put them in my red-spotted medicine bag. Had I packed enough prednisolone, spironolactone and potassium chloride? I opened the medicine bag, looked inside, and tipped out the contents on the table by the window.

Bernhard's style, with its peculiar recursive throb, its controlled clause repetitions, is wonderfully suited for recapturing the myriad forms of psychic hypertrophy. In *The Lime Works* the relentless circularity mimes the process of a mind that is no longer in control of its own momentum (" . . . his wife had spoken to him about a pair of mittens she was making for Konrad, she had been working on this one pair of mittens for six months, because she unravelled each mitten just before she had finished knitting it . . ."). In *Correction*, on the other hand, the insistent hammering of clauses, not so different from the above, is used to project the extreme difficuty of thought. Roithamer (very much a Wittgenstein figure) and his narrator, who is also a philosopher, proceed by way of repetitions because thought cannot hope to penetrate reality in any other way—truth is not to be caught on the wing. Stylistically conjoined in this way, "genius" and madness look like the heads and tails on a spinning coin.

But Rudolph is neither genius nor madman—quite—and to transmit his particular condition, Bernhard loosens the weave of his prose somewhat. Sentences are shorter and jumpier and are paced to suggest the erratic movements of a psyche bent upon hiding from itself. Phrase repetitions are manipulated in symphonic fashion: they give us the crescendo and diminuendo of uncontrollable nervous activity.

After interminable and, for the reader, infuriating vacillations, Rudolph finally does travel to Palma. He arranges himself in his hotel room, puts his papers in order—and is no more able to work than he was before. Only now, away from his sister, he has removed his main excuse for inactivity. By escaping to freedom he has painted himself still further into a corner. But he cannot see this. For Rudolph the future remains an inexhaustible fund of propitious moments—the miracle is certain to happen.

At this point, Berhhard inserts a curious flashback. Rudolph is in Palma on a previous visit. Walking in the town one day, Rudolph meets a young German woman named Anna Härdtl who promptly tells him her tragic story: her husband just recently jumped/fell to his death from their hotel window. Rudolph listens intently while she traces for him the events of their life together, and he accompanies her when she goes to look for the grave in the nearby cemetery. The whole circumstance somehow seems to gratify his own morbidity. We steel ourselves for some dark broodings. But no—quite unexpectedly, in the course of a long sentence, we recall that years have passed, that Rudolph is now in Palma a second time. It is a disturbing switch. So little has changed. The unfortunate Anna is a memory, but everything else remains as before: Rudolph is still ailing, his book is still unwritten. . . .

Nevertheless, years do not pass without some mark. In the interval since he was last in Palma, Anna's story has worked its way into his system. And as Rudolph walks along the familiar streets, the spell is renewed. One morning he wakes up possessed by her image. "I must go to the cemetery as quickly as possible," he tells himself. In three breathless sentences he is there, standing in front of the stone. He sees that there is a new plaque and that Anna's name has been engraved under her husband's. "Suicido," explains the porter. Rudolph rushes back to the hotel in a taxi—

> I drew the curtains in my room, writes Rudolph, took several sleeping tablets, and woke up twenty-six hours later in a state of extreme anxiety.

Concrete ends with a spasm. We are pitched out into uncertainty. Are we to trust the momentum of the last pages, to assume that Rudolph hurries to throw himself from the window? It would be consonant with Bernhard's belief—that durability is finite in the face of pain. What's more, the logic of

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events fits well with Camus's insight about the suicide, that a single event, a straw, is enough to trigger a person who has been steadily, imperceptibly "undermined" by life.

ON THE other hand, recalling Nietzsche's formulation, we may also venture the opposite: that Anna's strength of character, the purity of her despair, enabled her to grasp her situation and act upon the imperative, and that it is Rudolph's tragedy to be without that strength. We can imagine without difficulty how he drags himself forward from day to day, as before, pushing his stake to the next square, waiting for the next—redeeming—turn of the roulette wheel. Bernhard has calculatedly left us to our own devices. He has pressed the expected exclamation point down to make a tensely bent question mark.

Reading through Bernhard's novels consecutively, one begins to remark, and later enlarge upon, a problematic paradox. As we have seen, the concerns are dark ones and the conclusions unrelievedly bleak. Madness and suicide dance attendance upon exacerbated consciousness; there is no relief except through self-deception. Whatever our own biases might be, we set them apart while the writer performs. But here is the crux: writing is, by its very nature, an effort at the redemption of pain. So long as it continues, it intimates that redemption is possible. The statements Bernhard makes are, in a sense, contradicted by the fact of their being made. We feel, and respond to, the authorial presence behind the projected voices. But it is difficult to hear the writer keep saying "I can't go on" without eventually muttering "but you do." As Shakespeare understood, "The worst is not so long as we can say: This is the worst."

Still, we must concede that Bernhard's is a very real and impassioned despair, and that the novels, even though they move within a confined locus, have emblematic force. Konrad, Roithamer, and Rudolph, in their production or paralysis, represent what Susan Sontag has called "the artist as exemplary sufferer." Their torments are caused, in part, by the conditions of the modern social order, and their invectives are not wholly off the mark. What Rudolph writes on the eve of his departure for Palma could just as well have been set down by Konrad or Roithamer:

> If I go away, I said to myself, sitting in the iron chair, I shall be leaving a country whose utter futility depresses me every single day, whose imbecilities daily threaten to stifle me, and whose idiocies will sooner or later be the end of me, even without my illnesses. Whose political and cultural conditions have of late become so chaotic that they turn my stomach when I wake up every morning, even before I am out of bed. Whose indifference to intellect has long since ceased to cause the likes of me to despair, but if I am truthful only to vomit . . . in which everything that once gave pleasure to so-called thinking people, or at least made it possible for them to go on existing, has been expelled, expunged and extinguished, in which only the most primitive instinct for survival prevails and the slightest pretension to thought is stifled at birth.

This is not lament—this is rage. We can only guess at its deeper origins, though the relationships depicted in the novels may give us a clue. Where rage of this intensity is directed outward, we often find the sociopath; where inward, the suicide. Where it breaks out laterally, onto the page, we sometimes find a most unsettling artistic vision.

SVEN BIRKERTS

Sven Birkerts, who lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, currently teaches expository writing at Harvard University.

JAPAN KINK

Behind the Mask: On Sexual Demons, Sacred Mothers, Transvestites, Gangsters, Drifters and Other Japanese Cultural Heroes by Ian Buruma

(Pantheon, 242 pp., $15.95)

Ian Buruma has written a lively book about what we may call the dirty side of Japan, more interesting to some of us than the pretty side that has been so much more widely publicized by the Japanese information services and by those of us who write about Japan. In his preface Buruma says that his book

> is an attempt to draw a picture of the Japanese as they imagine themselves to be, and as they would like themselves to be. . . . I shall try to show the products of a more popular, more collective imagination: films, comics, plays, and books catering to the taste of the maximum amount of people, and thus often the lowest common denominator. This is not always the best art, though it is certainly not to be despised, but it is often revealing of the people at whom it is aimed. Because of this, I have devoted more space to the raunchy, violent, and often morbid side of Japanese culture than to the more refined and delicate forms with which we are familiar in the West.

Buruma is the first to describe at length this side of the Japanese nature, and we must be grateful to him.

Of the thirteen chapters, six are about women, five are about men, one is about mannish women and womanish men, and one is a conclusion and summary with the title, not a little ironic, "A Gentle People." Rather different Japanese emerge than those whom the cheerleaders have made us aware of. They are much impelled by emotions and by "sincerity" and not greatly concerned with the rational faculty, and they are scarcely interested at all in morals. Once I was sitting with an American friend who had long been in Japan. On the television screen before us was the spectacle of students tearing the most honored university in the land to pieces. "This country has never had any defenses against sincerity," said my friend. It was a very good explanation for the remarkable scene, and the best explanation for the fact that the students among this "gentle people" have been violent as have the students of no other land.

Buruma describes and he theorizes. Perhaps inevitably, the description is more effective than the theory, some of which is interesting but not entirely convincing. This is true of one point which he makes early and repeatedly,

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and which is basic: "that the contrast between the native, Shinto-inspired popular culture and the more aristocratic, Buddhist-inspired aesthetic is so strong that one could almost speak of two separate cultures." A page later we are informed that the rulers of the land made people "behave according to imported codes, which they did not really share." This does not seem an adequate explanation for either the hedonistic or the puritanical elements in Japanese culture. The military chronicles of the Middle Ages reveal that a stern code governed the behavior of rustic warriors who cannot possibly have been indoctrinated by a hedonistic court. Moreover, it was during the Tokugawa or Edo Period that Japanese society came closest to totalitarianism, and the stern code of the Edo merchant was not externally imposed. It had very deep roots in mercantile culture. Nor is Buruma correct to blame a foreign cult, or give it credit, for the earliest Japanese pornography. Surely pornography is a product of sophistication, which takes many forms. The permissive Mediterranean cultures have it, and so do the repressive cultures of the north. All through the ages the Japanese, not as classes but as individuals, have been queer combinations of the repressive and the permissive.

BURUMA also makes much of the Japanese view of moral absolutes, or rather the lack of absolutes. "Morality is [for the Japanese] very much a matter of time and place and nothing is absolute," he writes early in the book. It may be so, and then again it may not. We must be sure what we mean by such complex, suggestive words as "morality" and "absolute." At the very least, the Japanese sense of loyalty, crucial to the economic miracles we keep hearing about, approaches both absoluteness and morality. So does the sense of kin responsibility. In any event, these are arguable matters which have a way of eluding generalization.

Buruma's descriptions of low-brow movies and "comic" books and the like, however, are uniformly lively, amusing, and to the point. There is, for instance, running commentary on the plots of the *hahamono*, the "mother things," as he calls them, of the cinema. It could be intrusive, and it is not. Mothers are cause for sentimentality the world over, but in few places can tragic mothers be more conspicuous than in the Japanese popular entertainments. There was an actress, now deceased, who so excelled at *hahamono* that she was known as "the mother of Japan" (and not, be it noticed, the sweetheart). Her most celebrated vehicle, *A Japanese Tragedy*, had in it far less bite than Dreiser's American one.

> And how she suffers! She is thrown out of her husband's house by her brother-in-law and she slides lower and lower down the scales of poverty until finally she has to suffer nightly humiliation as a barmaid in a vulgar seaside resort. For the children she will do anything.
>
> But are they grateful? Of course not. They despise her. . . . The poor, sacrificing mother of Japan has no choice but to do what poor, sacrificing mothers always do in these cases: she jumps in front of the nearest oncoming train.

ON THE masculine side, there is a cult of babyishness and purity, which dovetails nicely with the cult of the tragic goddess-mother. In the movies the good guys and bad guys are not cops and robbers or cowboys and Indians, but gangsters of unsullied Japanese purity and those who have been tainted by foreign viruses. That there is a strong coating of nationalism, even chauvinism, over all this, should be quite apparent—one can see why the Koreans do not much want the Japanese back. Of a high school baseball tournament which occurs semi-annually to purify the land, Buruma observes: ". . . no wonder that the present chairman of the High School Baseball Association let it be known that it is 'official policy' not to let foreign reporters into the ground. Presumably they would sully the holy purity of the event."

These and many other delights await the reader of Buruma's book. In the first quotation above, he seems to be saying (or do I misread him?) that none of the material he treats is "to be despised." Some of it, though, is downright loathsome. What he calls "comics" are an example. There is very little trace of the comical in most of them. When I was a child we called the colored Sunday supplement "the funnies." These might well be called "the uglies" or "the ouchies," so filled are they with cruelty and the least lovable of people. Among those which I find most repellent is an exceedingly popular one about a motherly prostitute. She comforts mama-lorn boys by cuddling them against her breasts and between

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her thighs. In one episode a colleague of whom she does not approve is murdered in a most brutal and gory way. Of this she does approve. The colleague was not motherly enough. She was lustful.

Selecting somewhat different elements from the same popular genres, one might come up with a different view of the Japanese mother and father, for instance, than the Blondie-Dagwood combination which Buruma offers. One might, indeed, find the terrible, tyrannical father and the victimized mother. I sometimes wonder if Blondie might not in fact be responsible for the Japanese convention of the weak father and the strong mother. She has been a great success in Japan, and Japanese commercial artists do not at all mind revealing themselves as derivative. Observing families in the park on Sunday afternoons in Japan, I do not myself see the bored nonentity of a father whom Buruma seems to see. I see them trying rather hard and doing rather well—and it is not easy to arouse the respect and affection of one's children when one has a single afternoon a week on which to work at it.

There can be no question, however, that Japanese women love to mother and Japanese men love to be mothered. I have known Japanese men who, with their wives indisposed and unable to serve, have seemed unable to find the way to the front door. Similarly, we have the pretty boy at the center of the movie and television screen, not very masculine, a bit of a sissy even, but idolized. Since women are the ones who sit all day at the screen and buy the products it purveys, we may say with confidence that it is they who love these pretty creatures, so *kawaii* (which we may render as "darling"), so ideal for cosseting.

Buruma makes the Japanese look somewhat silly. Very well; all of us are in some respects silly. Since Japanese popular culture is so different from ours, the elements of silliness emerge more conspicuously. Buruma is the first to undertake a systematic treatment of the dirty, sentimental, and yes, silly side of Japanese culture. Because it is there, and because it is important, it should not be neglected, however the dealers in "international understanding" may feel. He has done his work well, and indeed with restraint. And what might he have done with Japanese popular music, which he scarcely mentions? The lyrics represent the worst kind of self-pity, the treacly kind, and the accompaniment sounds like a computerized accordion playing minor variations on the same insipid themes for hours and hours and hours. And how very much more he could have written about television. Japanese television prides itself, rightly, on technical excellence, but the content is base; and, because no country in the world is more television saturated, a great many better things, such as literature, are suffering.

EDWARD SEIDENSTICKER

Edward Seidensticker is the author most recently of *Low City, High City: Tokyo from Edo to the Earthquake* (Knopf).

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

Karl Marx Collective: Economy, Society and Religion in a Siberian Collective Farm by Caroline Humphrey (Cambridge University Press). Marx meets Buddha in Siberia; a scholarly study of a strange corner of the world. (Reviewed 8/6/84)

A Very Private Eye: An Autobiography in Diaries and Letters by Barbara Pym (Dutton). The trials and triumph of a novelist known as one of the most underrated writers of the century. (7/16&23/84)

Motives for Fiction by Robert Alter (Harvard University Press). Occasional critical writings that transcend their occasion. (7/9/84)

Infante's Inferno by G. Cabrera Infante (Harper & Row). Outrageous memories of a Havana boyhood. (7/9/84)

Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850 by Sean Wilentz (Oxford University Press). A pioneering study in the history of the American proletariat. (7/9/84)

Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941-1960 by Ronald H. Spector (Center of Military History, U.S. Army). The accomplished first volume in a history of the Army's tortuous experience in Vietnam. (7/2/84)

Dawn to the West by Donald Keene (Holt, Rinehart, & Winston). 2,000 pages exhaustively, informatively, covering the modern literature of Japan. (6/25/84).

An American Procession by Alfred Kazin (Knopf). The brilliant culmination of a critic's lifelong look at American literature. (6/18/84)

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 2*

issues that have been the principal concerns of Dr. Sakharov. We plan to support the human rights and peace movements in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe, to conduct research on the U.S.S.R., based upon continuing contacts with the human rights activists inside the country as well as with the thousands of émigrés and defectors who now reside in the West. All studies will be aimed at finding practical ways to promote democracy in the Soviet Union.

We believe that the gradual democratization of Soviet society is the best and most reliable way to preserve world peace. If TRB knows better ways to achieve this goal, we would like to hear them. The World Endowment of Totalitarianism provided by the U.S.S.R. is counted in billions of dollars. The democracies do not have to spend so much because they have a better product to sell, but they still have to spend something. Every penny invested in the democratization of the U.S.S.R. will later save thousands of dollars for our defense budget. Those eager to kill the NED should think about that.

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COMING:
Martin Peretz
on
Lillian Hellman.

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SAN FRANCISCO DIARIST

The Last Day

I DON'T KNOW how it came across on television, but in Moscone Center the mix of tones and flavors on the final night of the convention was close to perfect. Despite the wild variations, everything ended up complementing everything else. I'm a bit dubious about flag-waving in principle, but the flag is a potent symbol and it was a relief to see the right deprived of its exclusive use. Geraldine Ferraro's speech was simple and dignified, Mondale's was maybe the best of his life, and the closing image of the two of them up there on the podium was charged with meaning and promise. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" was exactly the right song to end with, and I've never heard it sung better than it was by Jennifer Holliday.

THE ONLY TIME it looked like there might be trouble was when Ted Kennedy got up to introduce Mondale. As the Kennedy applause lines started rolling out in the great booming Kennedy baritone, people shook their heads and exchanged chuckles. Ted's misbehaving again, they thought, trying to make the poor sap who has to follow him look insipid. Only it didn't turn out that way. Kennedy wowed 'em, of course; but so, in a totally different fashion, did Mondale, and Kennedy's *salsa* was the perfect condiment for Mondale's nourishing statesmanship. Actually, Kennedy wasn't trying to be naughty—or at least no naughtier than he had leave to be. Robert Shrum, Kennedy's press secretary, told me a couple of hours before his boss got up to speak that the Mondale people were so confident of their man's speech that they had given Kennedy permission to do his worst, which is to say his best. So Kennedy went ahead and unleashed a partisan crowd-pleaser, full of delightful bombast and fine anti-Republican scorn. It was exactly as hackneyed as the occasion demanded, neither less nor more. Listening to him, I kept thinking back to an Elvis Presley concert I went to at Madison Square Garden in 1972. Elvis looked and sounded great. He was fuller of face than he had been in "Heartbreak Hotel" days, and now his back-up band included strings, and he wore an ermine cape, and he had an ample supply of silk kerchiefs to toss to his now rather matronly female admirers. Best of all, Elvis showed he wasn't about to take himself or his legend too seriously. His absurd performance was redeemed by a charming hint of good-natured and knowing self-parody. And that's how Kennedy was at Moscone Center. By '88 he may be tossing scarves, too.

MONDALE HAD the advantage of expectations low enough so that it wasn't going to take very much to exceed them. He did better than that, though. He went a considerable distance toward curing, or at least showing that he may be capable of curing, his worst political problems—especially the self-created ones. After a year of being told that he should say no to some "interest group" in order to demonstrate independence, he did just that to the biggest interest group of all, the taxpayers. Style was married to substance: astringent calls to sacrifice, it turns out, go better with Mondale's austere Norwegian personality than do lists of promises, his former specialty. In everything from the proposal for a tax increase to the personal passages ("you may not really know me") to the direct appeal to Reagan voters ("I heard you"), the speech was daring, bold, unorthodox—everything Mondale supposedly is not. The only real flaw was the last line, "I want to be President of the United States." Despite an elaborate buildup to the effect that little girls as well as little boys will be able to say this in the future, the raw ambition of the line was as jarring in the ears as a J. Arthur Rank gong. It was a step down from Mondale's discarded stump-speech closer, "I am ready to be President of the United States." (Will "C'mon, gimme the Oval Office" be next?) That aside, the speech was a first-rate job. Martin Kaplan, Mondale's head scribe, is a credit to the breed.

THE TABLEAUX at the end were even better than the speech. Of course, it was no trick to improve upon the 1980 nightmare, when Teddy stiff-armed Jimmy to the ghastly strains of "Happy Days Are Here Again." But this was nearly as good as 1976, when Daddy King led the congregation in "We Shall Overcome" and strong men cried. This time strong women were crying. At Moscone Center Mondale and Ferraro were new and intoxicating wine in an old bottle. It wasn't their first appearance together; a week earlier, Mondale had introduced Ferraro as his running mate before the Minnesota state legislature. But that was an unfamiliar scene. Now we were looking at the familiar quadrennial scenes that conclude every convention: the ticket, the ticket with spouses, the ticket with spouses and children, the ticket with spouses and defeated candidates and party elders. Only this time when the candidates for President and Vice President stood behind the podium waving and smiling it was a man and a woman, and it looked like the most natural thing in the world. There's nothing unusual about a couple accepting plaudits at the end of a convention. Remember Ike and Mamie? Jack and Jackie? Dick and Pat? Hubert and Muriel? Jimmy and Rosalynn? Ronnie and Nancy? With Fritz and Gerry the woman is still the junior partner—this is consolidation, not revolution—but now she is truly a partner, no longer simply an aspect of the man. And she has her own family, her own helpmeet. After this, the Republican ticket is going to look a little strange. Wives, yes. *But where are the women?*

DID IT WORK? Do the Democrats come out of this convention significantly stronger than they went into it? Well, there's a new Gallup poll that shows Mondale-Ferraro running essentially even with Reagan-Bush. I like it, but somehow I just can't believe it. That last night may have been—as Jim Johnson, Mondale's campaign manager, said exultantly the morning after—the most successful closing night of any convention ever. But the convention's ratings were about as low as you can get and still be on all three networks. And even if everything breaks Mondale's and Ferraro's way, history shows that you can't beat a personally popular incumbent at a time of economic recovery (however illusory) at home and relative quiet (however ominous) abroad. There's no precedent for it. But there's no precedent for this ticket, either.

H.H.

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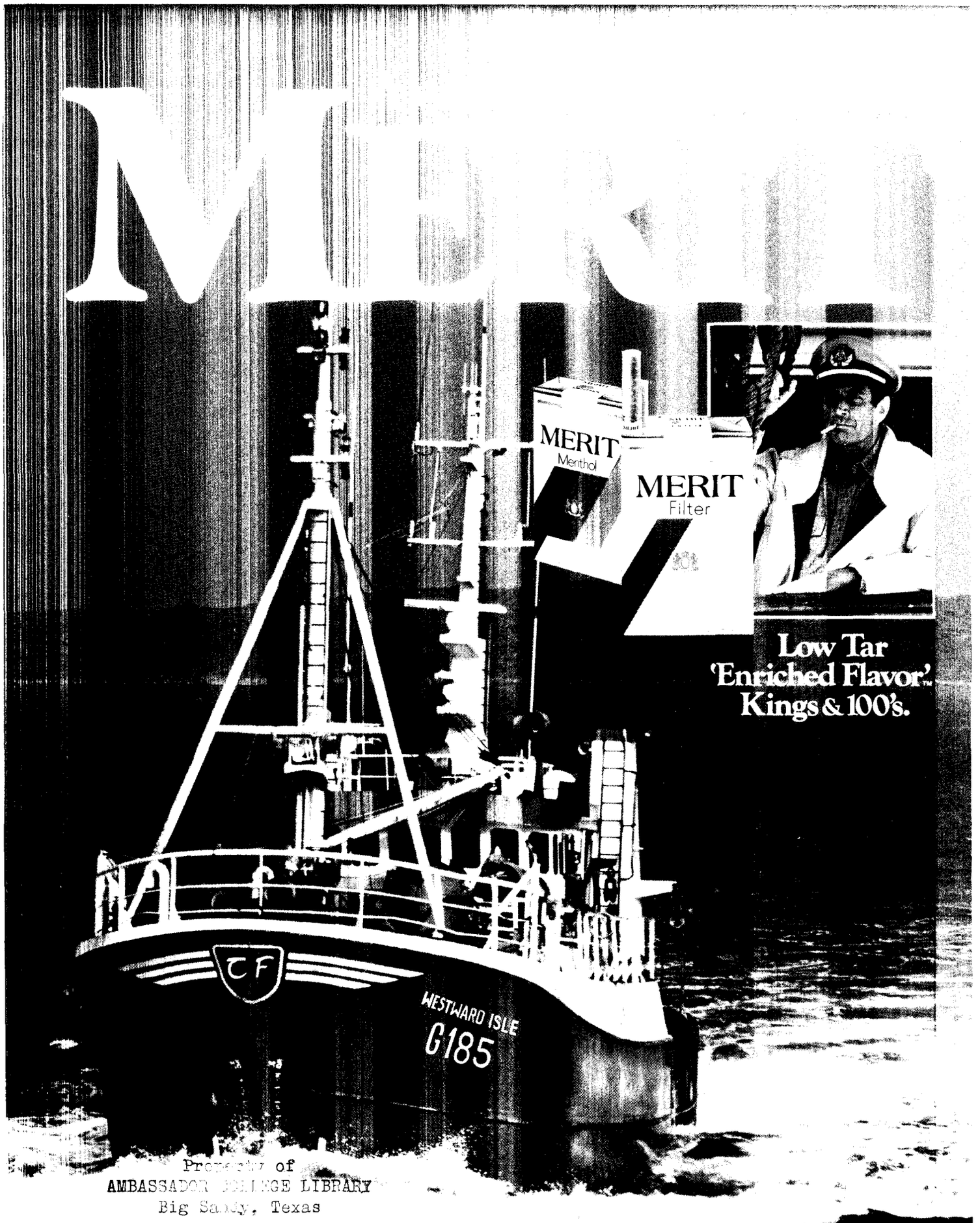

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Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

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Kings: 9 mg "tar," 0.6 mg nicotine—100's Reg: 11 mg "tar," 0.7 mg nicotine—100's Men: 10 mg "tar," 0.7 mg nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Mar.'84

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